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*The Business &
Marketing of Icons:*

Conference Proceedings

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The Business & Marketing of Icons

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The Business & Marketing of Icons:

Icons pervade the world of fashion and business. As symbols that evoke timeless silhouettes, significant concepts, or creative individuals, icons resonate with all of us. They inspire us, stimulate us, and inform our thought processes.

Understanding and channeling the power of icons is central to the business of fashion—its creation, its marketing, its pedagogies. The purpose of this conference is to explore the following themes:

I. Business Icons

- An evaluation of iconic business models
- Developing new strategies

II. Marketing Icons

- The use and power of icons in marketing

III. Building a Brand/Designing New Icons

- How business builds the image of an icon or becomes an icon itself.

IV. Preserving History/Cultural Icons

- Cultural impact past, present and future

V. Education

- Use of icons in the pedagogy of Business, Marketing, and Pop Culture

VI. Icons & New Technologies

- New technologies ranging from performance enhanced textiles for athletes to business strategies and new electronics.

Business Icons

- An evaluation of iconic business models
- Developing new strategies

I.

GOONJ – Patronizing social commitment & reuse

Harleen Sahni National Institute of Fashion Technology, India

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GOONJ – Patronizing social commitment & reuse

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Harleen Sahni presented paper “Sustainability-Clean & Green Fashion” in ‘Fashion & Well Being’, IFFTI Conference, London in 2009. Her paper “Slow Fashion-Fostering change towards Sustainable Fashion” was published in proceedings of LeNS Conference, Bangalore in 2010. The author has also published articles in fibre2fashion2.com. Harleen Sahni also co-authored research papers for NID-CII Design Summit 2012 and Nirma International Conference on Management 2013.

Abstract

GOONJ, formed in 1999 by Anshu Gupta, is a model of social concern, contribution and community development. The organization channelizes unused material, mostly clothing, lying idle in urban homes, to far-flung Indian villages where it is utilized either as an economic resource or as a conciliator of villagers’ elementary, yet unaddressed needs. GOONJ’s “One Rupee One Cloth” initiative sends clothes anywhere in India within 97 paise, which includes cost of collection, sorting, packing, transporting and distribution. The objective is “not just to make clothing a basic need of the poor, but also to add dignity to it and turn it into a resource for development.”

Addressing one of the most basic needs of womanhood, GOONJ undertook a remarkable project of making reusable sanitary cloth pads for women in rural India who used straw, wood shavings, ash, newspapers, dried leaves and hay as blotters. Priced at just Rs. 3, these low-cost sanitary napkins are made out of old cotton sheets and discarded clothing after cutting in strips and sterilizing. Most of the napkins are distributed free to sensitize public to the national problem. This initiative brought global accolades, including the Development Marketplace Award from World Bank in 2007.

“Clothes for work”, another GOONJ initiative confers clothing a developmental edge. Villagers have to identify and solve pressing problems of their localities such as road-repair, cleaning drains and plantation, before receiving clothes. Success stories from villages of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa are credited to GOONJ for the outcome.

The paper proposes to evaluate the GOONJ model in terms of its objectives, approaches and procedures. The paper will contrive strategies to enable GOONJ maximize individual and institutional involvement and to amplify the outreach of this echo of community well-being and concern.

Introduction

India is a developing nation. Progress is seen in various fields such as retail, education, research, technology and so on. Consumer markets are growing. An ever-increasing number of players in various categories of consumer products and services are making sizeable investments & extensive efforts to understand customers’ needs and requirements. One of the flourishing sectors in today’s economy is the apparel and textile sector. Various national and international apparel retailers are competing to cater to the needs of the rapidly growing Indian consumer market where consumption is more than ever before.

But somewhere, in the remote Indian villages, there is no ear to hear the call of the under-privileged for even the most basic requirements of mankind. The impoverished, both in rural and urban areas and people in far-flung Indian villages are calling the attention of the urban population for clothes, which are usually in surplus, lying unused for years in urban homes. Poverty in India is widespread. According to World Bank Report for 2010, 32.7% of the total Indian population falls below the international poverty line of US\$ 1.25 per day (Purchasing Power Parity) while 68.7% lives on less than US\$ 2 per day. Majority of the Indian population lives in villages. For this segment of society, life is a battle for survival as each dawn marks the beginning of new encounters for managing everyday necessities like medicines, clothes, cooking utensils, school books etc. The unavoidable need for a piece of clothing by a family member can present an economic crisis for the household. Fulfilling the need may involve sacrifices - deepening a cycle of debt, preventing a family member from eating or stopping a child from going to school.

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility, Textile and Garment industry, responsible business, sustainable business, ethical sourcing, Bangalore

The massive requirement of clothing in such parts of the country is majorly for two uses -

- Clothing for under-privileged as a life saving device
- Clothing for women of rural India as an aid for their unaddressed basic needs

At the other end of the economic spectrum, there are the affluent city-dwellers who actually get benefitted from the country's growing economy. The urban Indians have high disposable incomes and increasing purchasing power attributing to the consumer boom that Indian retail industry is witnessing in current times. Consumption in the wealthy urban households is on a rise. Clothes, like various other household items and lifestyle products are purchased frequently backed by just the desire of keeping pace with the latest trends and not as an imperative requirement. The articles are seldom used to their complete life-spans. Although, old, discarded articles, particularly clothes find alternative uses in the Indian homes but donations are either highly unorganized or happen mostly at the times of disasters or natural calamities. Most donations are thoughtless and not in accordance to the actual requirements. People generally donate articles damaged beyond repair, to clean-up their spaces.

The call for clothing was heard by Mr. Anshu Gupta, a young enterprising Indian, Master's in Economics, a Double Major in Journalism and Mass Communications. In 1991, when Anshu travelled to Uttarkashi as a relief-work volunteer in an earthquake-struck region, he was shocked and deeply saddened by the distress of the rural masses that were deprived of even the most basic necessities of life. This experience sowed the seeds of initiating an organized effort to channelize the unused material from urban homes to the impoverished rural communities in Anshu's mind. The idea gradually developed in form of "GOONJ" and Anshu gave up his job with an Indian MNC to become a social entrepreneur and nurture his vision. "GOONJ" was established in 1998 with the full support and partnership of his wife, Meenakshi and other friends.

Anshu learnt the importance of self reliance and optimum utilization of resources at an early age. When he was 14, his father suffered a heart attack. Being the eldest of the four siblings in a middle-class family, Anshu had to shoulder the huge responsibility of helping his mother in taking care of the family and managing their livelihood with the meager resources available. Presently, Anshu is based in Delhi with his wife and daughter and is deeply engrossed in facilitating an economic bridge between urban, wealthy India and impoverished, rural India by simply sharing the surplus of wealth and utilities. Recently, on November 6, 2012, Anshu Gupta was honored with the award of India's Social Entrepreneur of the Year 2012 by Ms. Sheila Dikshit, Chief Minister of Delhi. The award was announced by The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship, a sister organization of the World Economic Forum, in partnership with the Jubilant Bhartia Foundation.

The subsequent part of the paper includes the following sections-

- GOONJ – The beginning
- The GOONJ way of working
- GOONJ's initiatives for "Health & Dignity of rural women"
- GOONJ's initiative for "Clothes for life"
- Strategies for spreading awareness about social commitment & widening the reach of GOONJ's activities.
- Conclusion

The paper proposes to evaluate the GOONJ model in terms of its objectives, approaches and procedures. The paper will contrive strategies to enable GOONJ maximize individual and institutional involvement and to amplify the outreach of this echo of community well-being and social concern.

I. GOONJ-The beginning

Clothing gives human beings a distinguished identity from all other living beings. Apart from food and shelter, it is a basic necessity. The thought of being unclothed on streets, especially in extreme climatic conditions, is very terrifying and disturbing.

In the cold winters of Delhi in 1991, Anshu Gupta, a student and freelancing photo-journalist found a young man lying dead on a street. With an empty bottle of liquor and a full plate of uneaten food near him, it was evident that hunger was not the cause of death but the man had died drinking to keep himself warm. There were no clothes to protect him from the severe cold. Anshu was deeply moved. Sometime later, when Anshu met Habib, he realized that for the poor people, clothing is shelter. Habib was in the odd profession of picking-up dead bodies from the streets. His rickshaw was labeled “Disposer of dead bodies for the Delhi Police” and was generally found near the crowded entrance of Lok Nayak Jayaprakash Narayan Hospital in Delhi. For his services, Habib was paid about Rs. 25 per body. Habib was over-worked in winters as there were many bodies to pick-up. He wrapped the bodies respectfully in the white cloth issued by the police. Most of these were migrants wearing ragged clothes, who had likely come to Delhi for employment opportunities. In 1998, Gupta started an organization, GOONJ, with the objective to find a way to address the problem of ‘Scarcity of Clothing’ systematically and craft a well-organized, permanent solution for re-distributing basic necessities of life amongst people who need them and value them. This objective of social commitment and reuse has earned various reputed awards for GOONJ, one being from the World Bank’s Development Marketplace.

Anshu’s GOONJ, meaning ‘an echo’, is a reverberation of the “Call for clothing” of rural & underprivileged India. It is a nationwide movement demanding attention of urban masses to be aware of social issues and contribute meaningfully. GOONJ is a model of social concern, contribution and community development. The underlying belief is that materials such as clothes, medicines, furniture, electronic equipment and other essential items that are surplus or unused in the homes of the wealthy can be converted into a substantial economic resource for the country. GOONJ also supports village and slum communities in infrastructure and local development projects. GOONJ’s “One Rupee One Cloth” initiative sends clothes anywhere in India within 97 paise. This includes cost of collection, sorting, packing, transporting and distribution. The aim is to establish a culture of sustained donations in India by channelizing excess resources in urban households to the neglected, impoverished rural and disaster-prone areas and use it as a resource for development.

II. The GOONJ way of working

Anshu’s approach is a simple and practical model of matching the demand and supply of livelihood essentials. Extensive market surveys are done to understand and carefully analyze different region-specific lifestyle patterns and gather data pertaining to gender ratio, clothing requirements, food habits, cooking practices etc. and identify the actual demand, both in quantitative and qualitative dimensions. Waste material from urban homes is collected and transformed into usable articles for low-income households and deprived communities. This not only fulfills their basic requirements but also enables them to maintain a decent and dignified living. The supply is managed by transforming donor attitudes about reusable resources lying unused in their homes and encouraging appropriate and regular donations with genuine concern and thoughtfulness for the poor.

Besides the GOONJ collection centers, operations are also done at community hubs like residents’ associations, schools, corporate organizations and community centers. Collection drives are also used as opportunities for educating the public about good practices in donation. Besides these regular drives, GOONJ operates its collection centers in 9 Indian cities (with 35 centers in Delhi itself) and deals with 100 tons of material each month, mostly clothes along with utensils, school supplies, footwear, toys and many other items. It has an annual budget of Rs. 3-4 crores, 150 employees and hundreds of volunteers. With more than 250 NGO partner agencies, it currently assists about half a million people in 21 Indian states.

GOONJ accepts donations that are usable pieces given with care and deliberation. The collected clothes are processed by volunteers and paid staff. These are inspected individually, sorted, and washed and folded. Requisitions are taken from organizations on the basis of gender, age and size and accordingly clothes are packed in re-usable sacks and distributed to approximately 200 destinations in rural areas through service agencies which function as distribution partners. Sacks are numbered and the numbers are recorded in a database. GOONJ endeavors to have a national spread by involving carefully selected local partners such as grassroots organizations, social activists and even units of the Indian army in the distribution network. The

system maintains transparency and accountability. When a consignment finally reaches the target community, records of receipts, both as visuals (videos and photographs) and signatures or thumbprints of recipients, are sent back to GOONJ and are available to donors. Operational costs are minimized by keeping core staff small and using a network of over 300 volunteers across the country. There is a conscious attempt to minimize wastage by using every piece of fabric or paper. Unwanted material is used in a multitude of ways. Torn clothes are set aside for conversion into usable products. Waste fabric is converted into narrow tapes to be used as drawstrings for petticoats or is shredded and stuffed into pillows and quilts.

School-to-School initiative is one of GOONJ's more recent programs. The lack of stationery, bags and uniforms is a major obstacle to attending school for the poor rural children. The School-to-School initiative encourages schools to hold end-of-term drives for schools supplies such as pens, exercise books, uniforms etc., which is then distributed to rural schools. According to GOONJ analysis, 4 to 5 rural schools can be supported by an urban school having approximately 2000 students. The program has been implemented in Delhi, Bihar and in South India and 2000 children have been benefitted so far.

GOONJ has been playing an active role in distributing relief material at the time of disasters and natural calamities such as earthquakes, floods, cyclone etc. The tsunami of 2004 was one such unfortunate happening that left behind grief and leftovers of incongruous and insensitive givings in huge amounts. People from all over the country sent trainloads of clothes, a quantity far in excess of the need, much of which had no use in South India, for example woolens. Cleaning of the huge piles of inapt clothing became as challenging as the relief-work. In the absence of volunteers for the task, remaining heaps of clothes were gathered by district collectorates in Tamil Nadu and shifted to warehouses. Such an enormous amount of clothes lying in warehouses was a painful irony for Anshu. Meeting a handful of requirements from villages was always a big challenge and there lay piles of orphaned clothes in the government warehouses. The news that the clothes were being sold in lots to pay for relief works to merchants who were buying them for Rs. 2 and could resell for Rs. 40, enraged Anshu who argued that aid material could not be used to make money. The special tsunami collector Mr. C V Shankar, in Chennai invited a solution from Anshu who took up this pioneering project of turning the Tsunami-rejected cloth into a resource for the needy people of Tamil Nadu and other parts of the country. The clothes were finally handed over to Goonj in June 2005.

Anshu started the process of reclaiming with a small amount of Rs. 10,000/- from a well-wisher. Sorting & cleaning operations began in the part of the warehouse allotted by the state for the purpose. Local girls were recruited and trained in the tested Goonj workflow. The mountains of waste material started transforming into usable articles. The work was highly appreciated and in January 2006, Deutsche Bank sanctioned Rs. 20 lakhs as assistance. 16 sewing machines were bought to begin a conversions section for making sanitary napkins. About 40 women got employed in the unit and the cloth pile of over a 2 million pieces started diminishing at the rate of 4,000 pieces per day, reaching the needy people all over the country. Through this initiative GOONJ became a model of innovative public service. Thus, the GOONJ model is not only based on the concepts of 'Clothes for life' and 'Clothes for dignity' but it also emphasizes on disaster preparedness for rapidly responding to the needs for relief material in affected areas.

III. GOONJ's initiatives for "Health & Dignity of rural women"

Clothing is a scarce resource for many Indians. Most women in the economically weaker communities have a single sari to drape and must conceal themselves while it dries after washing. They also stay hidden indoors during their menstrual cycles due to lack of proper undergarments and a single piece of cloth to serve as a sanitary napkin. Orthodox religious beliefs add on to the agony of women by detaching them from society and their routine life during these days. Hence, most rural women experience extreme discomfort, isolation, disapproval and repugnance during their menstrual periods. The poor women cannot afford sanitary napkins and there is lack of cloth as blotter forcing them to use straw, wood shavings, ash, newspapers, dried leaves and hay. The use of dirty clothes and other unhygienic blotters result in various diseases. There are cases of cervical cancer caused by lack of hygiene during the menstrual periods. Women have to live with other vaginal horrors where insects residing in soil, like centipedes get lodged inside. People,

particularly the rural folk are hesitant to talk about health care of women during menstruation as it is considered to be a woman-only phenomenon and a subject too dirty to talk about.

GOONJ heard the meek, suppressed female voice from interiors of rural India, urging for support for basic personal care facilities and dignity and undertook a remarkable project of making reusable sanitary cloth pads for women of rural India. Priced at just Rs. 3, these low-cost sanitary napkins are made from old cotton sheets and discarded clothing after cutting in strips and sterilizing. Most of the napkins are distributed free to enable rural women realize the importance of the issue. Today, Goonj produces around 2 lakh napkins every month which enable women in rural areas manage their menstruation cycles hygienically. This initiative has brought global accolades, including the Development Marketplace Award from World Bank in 2007.

IV. GOONJ's initiative for "Clothes for work"

In another remarkable innovation, Goonj reinforces contribution of voluntary labour for community development and betterment and gives good clothes to workers in return. GOONJ's "Clothes for work" is a successful experiment that confers clothing a developmental edge by linking clothes to self-organized development activities in villages. Villagers have to identify the development gap areas and solve immediate problems of their localities such as road-repair, cleaning drains, plantation etc. and in return, get clothes and other material in accordance to their requirement. The model is a reflection of the Indian concepts of Bhoodan (Land-gift, a voluntary land reform movement), Gramdan (village-gift, renunciation of private property in land on a mass scale) and Shramdam (labor-gift, voluntary work through physical effort for social service & community development), which were advocated by Mahatma Gandhi and his disciple, Acharya Vinoba Bhave in the 1950s and contemplates the principles of self-reliance and all-round progress. Through this initiative, communities have built bamboo bridges, made their agricultural fields more fertile, made kitchen gardens, dug up wells, repaired roads, cleaned up water bodies etc. The contribution not only brings pride and dignity in receiving material but also develops a strong sense of ownership and empowerment.

"Clothes for work" concept brought in commendable results from various parts of the country. In Vidharbha Maharashtra, villagers built fences around their schools and temples. In Moregaon Assam, villagers repaired an approach road. In Kuthambakkam Tamil Nadu, a water body was cleared of weeds and quarry workers in Kundrathur cleared drains in their settlement. In Sunderbans Bengal, villagers cleaned and spruced the village surroundings. Clothes were received by villages as payment for the efforts done in all these cases. Success stories from villages of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa also are credited to GOONJ for exemplary makeovers.

V. Strategies for spreading awareness about social commitment & widening the reach of GOONJ's activities

GOONJ is an admirable and impeccable model of social innovation and commitment aiming at betterment of society through upliftment of neglected and weaker sections. Expansion of this "echo" is essential for maximizing public benefit, encouraging donations and generating revenues for smooth functioning.

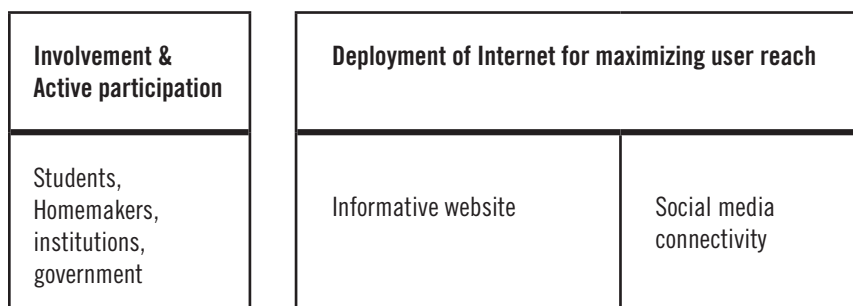


Figure 1: Proposed strategic framework for widening the GOONJ reach

The above figure illustrates the proposed strategic framework for GOONJ which identifies involvement of masses and use of modern technology and internet as crucial strategic elements required to strengthen the efforts. Involvement of people from different strata of the society through awareness generation programs and developing interfaces for active participation and contribution will transmit the GOONJ message further. Students of higher education institutes can be the most energetic carriers of the GOONJ philosophy through college fests, competitions, class-room projects, etc. Home-makers could be effective contributors of unused clothing and other surplus material and thus increase the resource-base. Further, institutional involvement needs to be promoted. Garment manufacturing companies, textile mills, government & non-government organizations and enterprises associated with arts & crafts such as Sewa, Anokhi, Fabindia, Gurbhari, Jharcraft and the like, can be roped in to give wider dimensions to the initiative.

Internet has emerged as the most powerful media in the current times. Young Indians are obsessed with social media connectivity and actively use it to express their opinions, spread information, post reviews, feedback and comments. The most important characteristic of this media is its viral nature and can be used to spread the GOONJ message at a global platform. GOONJ currently has a website which can be redesigned and made more informative. It could incorporate simple registration procedure for building-up a database of individuals and institutions interested in associating with GOONJ in its efforts. Thus, effective integration of people, processes and technology can revamp the GOONJ model for maximizing its reach, nationally as well as internationally and be more impactful in propagating the message of humanity and social concern.

VI. Conclusion

“Whenever you are in doubt or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test: Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him.”

This quote by Mahatma Gandhi elucidates the importance of giving and the satisfaction associated with it. GOONJ attempts to bring back the forgotten ‘joy of giving’ in our lives. The organization’s culture is very modest, very frugal and very factual. The entire chain of donors, processors, distributors and receivers are considered equal and respectable links of the value chain for providing relevant and timely aid to the deprived. Anshu Gupta and his wife found that in a middle-income household such as theirs’, there could identify about 67 items of clothing that were not used in the past three years. With this realization, they started the act of donating to make a positive change in the lives of the receivers. In the scenario of extreme contrast of India’s considerable economic growth over the past two decades and the evolving consumer market on one hand and the ugly reality of the poor and unclothed constituting a vast segment of society on the other hand, the pressing question that needs to be answered is “How much unused clothing is gathered in urban wardrobes?” The answer would be –‘More than can be imagined’.

GOONJ demonstrates a combination of streamlined systems of logistics management, public education, demand-specific sourcing and creative collaboration with other citizen groups. It is getting middle-class Indians recognize the tremendous value of material reuse and recycling in the context of the country’s poverty. GOONJ’s work has been truly commendable and remarkable in “Bridging the Clothing Divide”. It has grown from an individual social concern to a movement across nation for a better world where the impoverished and the needy have the basic clothing for self-protection and dignity. But for maximizing the GOONJ impact as an organization committed to social welfare, a low-cost, high-impact medium such as active involvement of the different strata of society with a concern for social well-being will be very effective. Technology integration, in terms of a stronger and more effective web-presence and social-media connectivity would act as essential building blocks of GOONJ’s revamped model.

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Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices in Indian Garment Manufacturing Industry- Case study of Bangalore

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Abstract

In the era of Globalization and Industrialization, Corporate Social Responsibility has become an important part of business practices. CSR percolates through the entire supply chain of the business. CSR practices give an edge to the practicing companies. It gives a positive effect on consumer evaluations of the company, their purchase intention and employee commitment. Socially responsible companies are said to be better able to manage risk, recover from adverse events and to innovate and solve important problems as a result of their interactions with stakeholders.

Garment Industry is no exception to this. In fact Garment industry being a labor intensive sector, CSR practices plays a pivotal role. Today, it is not only the quality of the garment that is cherished by the buyers and the retailers but also the working conditions, environment and the work culture where the garment is produced is of greater importance. CSR practices in the Textile and Garment Industry have developed a strong ground in the western world and its effect is percolating to the manufacturing bases in the developing countries.

Textile and Garment industry in India has been one of the largest labor oriented industry. The Garment industry in India plays a vital role as a manufacturing base for different US, UK and European buyers. In the world where people are being increasingly concerned about responsible business, ethical sourcing, eco-friendly production, CSR practices have become an increasingly important tool to attract a sustainable business strategy. Indian apparel industry seems to have taken these initiatives of ethical sourcing and responsible business quite seriously. Eagerness among the apparel manufacturers in India to be socially compliant has gone up in the last few years.

The paper deals with the CSR practices followed by garment manufacturing units in India with an in depth explorative study of the units in Bangalore. Bangalore has a sizable presence in garment and textile industry in the world map. There are more than 800 export garment manufacturing units in Bangalore that employs approximately 5 lakhs workers out of which 70% are women.

Introduction

The role of Corporate, by and large have witnessed a paradigm shift of achieving only financial gains and profitability to business that incorporates a broader societal context of ethical business. This concept is widely known as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) which percolates to all the levels of the supply chain or business. Garment Industry in India has also revamped their business norms and idea around the concepts of CSR. Here term CSR is being used to define organization's commitment and responsibility to their employees, society and the environment within which it operates.

The concept of CSR in India dates back to the era of Philosophers like Kautilya where business was performed on the principles of ethics. Several religions in India like "Zakaat" among Muslims, "Dhramada" among Hindus and "Daashaant" preaches the same principles of donating some portions of ones earning to the poor and needy in the society. In India the term CSR was fully recognized in late 1990s and was well accepted by large companies and the "Garment Industry" is no exception to this. Tata Group was the



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pioneer of CSR efforts in India inspired by the philosophy of Late Mahatma Gandhi. TISCO would not do business with company who do not comply with ethical norms.

Textile and Garment industry in India has been one of the largest labor oriented industry. India has approximately 30,000 readymade garment manufacturing units and 3 million people working in it. Flourishing manufacturing bases in India are Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai, Mumbai, Ludhiana and Tirupur. The Garment industry in India plays a vital role as a manufacturing base for different US, UK and European buyers. In the world where people are being increasingly concerned about responsible business, ethical sourcing, eco - friendly production, CSR practices have become an increasingly important tool to attract a sustainable business strategy. Indian apparel Industry seems to have taken these initiatives of ethical sourcing and responsible business quite seriously.

In today's fast changing global market, it is not only the quality of garments which is cherished by the retailers and manufacturers but also the working environments of the organization wherein the products were produced. Garment manufacturers have realized the fact that synergy between Business strategy and CSR is good for company's business as well as for a healthy society. Issues of workers' rights and their welfare too have come into the ambit of "the responsibility of businesses". Aberrations on these accounts are not easily tolerated and companies which default on these sensitive issues have a huge price to pay in terms of loss of face and of course, business.

Literature Review

Corporate Social Responsibility has many diverse dimensions to look at such as environmental, social, economic, stakeholders and voluntariness. (Dahlsrud, 2006) Scholars have also linked organizations' CSR to its relationship with not only its customers or shareholders but also with other stakeholders as suppliers, local community, etc. (Singh & Agarwal, 2011) Corporate social responsibility is a field where strong co-operation between business, academia and civil society is essential. (EC Report, 2009) CSR can be defined as positive social, environmental and economic actions in the five areas of environment, community, customers, supply chain and employees (Macgregor & Fontrodona, 2008) CSR involves addressing the legal, ethical, commercial and other expectations society has for business, and making decisions that fairly balance the claims of all key stakeholders. (EMC, 2005) Industry is the backbone of development. It is considered as standard to weight prosperity and civilization of a country. In the present times it is believed that the more industrious a nation is the more prosperous the country. The demand for companies that invest in CSR has increased in the recent years from customers, employers, suppliers, community groups, governments as well as some stakeholders. (Dari, 2012) One of the differences in the CSR initiatives between developed countries and developing countries is stakeholders being the object of CSR initiatives rather than active subject in shaping the CSR agenda in the later. With the globalization of markets and companies seeking being tagged as global companies' adherence to accepted CSR principles has become common. (Singh, 2010). India has been named among the top ten Asian countries paying increasing importance towards corporate social responsibility (CSR) disclosure norms. India was ranked fourth in the list, according to social enterprise CSR Asia's Asian Sustainability Ranking (ASR), released in October 2009. (Moon, 2011) Like many developing countries CSR practices are quite prevalent in India too. With trade liberalization many Multinational companies entered India and also brought their global CSR practices here. Not only this but numerous Indian origin corporates have also taken various CSR initiatives under serious business strategy. (Pradhan & Ranjan, 2010) Corporates have the expertise, strategic thinking, manpower and money to facilitate extensive social change. Effective partnerships between corporate, NGOs and the government will place India's social development on a faster track. (Verma & Sandhar, 2012; Berad, 2011) As per the survey done in 2008 over 90 per cent of all major Indian organizations surveyed were involved in CSR initiatives. In fact, the private sector was more involved in CSR activities than the public and government sectors. The leading areas that corporations were involved in were livelihood promotion, education, health, environment, and women's empowerment. (Shastri & Singh, 2012) There are very few successful inclusive business models in India under CSR initiatives which have been replicated beyond small circle of dedicated pioneers. (Gratl & Jenkins, 2011) The CSR activities of the corporates in India are mainly in the nature of providing

some public amenities; some infrastructure development like constructing schools rooms and community halls etc.: family planning; creating awareness on various issues like health and sanitation; organizing medical check-up camps; and providing some vocational training to the rural youth etc. Their activities are targeted more towards their own business promotion than the issues they project themselves to be working on. Many corporates have entered into education and health businesses and have started schools/colleges, polytechnics or other technical institutes, hospitals and medical colleges, and many a time, they pass off these businesses under the guise of their CSR activities/obligations. (AMRC Report, 2012) Lack of resources to spend on CSR activities is a major obstacle to move CSR forward in India. However, given India's mounting social problems, it is much more urgent for Indian firms to find resources to devote to CSR. (Arevalo & Aravind, 2011) CSR issues in textile sector includes environmental and social standards, retailers standards on CSR, sustainable supply chains, fair labour conditions (lower labour turnover, better quality workers), health, safety, Innovation for improvement in efficiency (responsible, ethical and environmentally safe production), protection of human rights (unfair labour conditions, sweatshops, child labour), Ethics in industrial purchasing, fair working hours, adequate compensation (minimum wages, excessive overtime, exploitation of workforce), health, safety, bribery, corruption, sustainable supply chains, Overview of various standards. (Martinuzzi et al, 2011)

The Study

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To study and understand the CSR initiatives being taken by selected Export oriented Garment manufacturing units (hence forth mentioned as GMUs).
2. To analyze the corporates' approach to work and their mode of action for implementation of CSR Initiatives.

Methodology

This is an exploratory research to achieve above mentioned objectives. This is a qualitative survey based research and the geographical scope of this study is Bangalore Apparel Cluster situated in Southern part of India. 47 garment manufacturing units were approached based on convenience sampling and out of which 32 units shared their initiatives under CSR. As mentioned the survey is qualitative and based on interviews taken. The respondents hold the profile of HR managers/compliance managers in the units with minimum work experience of 4 years in this field.

CSR and Bangalore Apparel Industry

Bangalore is one of the major hubs of Garment production in India with 1200 small, medium and big garment manufacturing factories. Out of these, 800 factories are export oriented with approximately six lakhs workers, out of which 70% are women workers. The products are majorly exported to USA, EU countries and UK. Bangalore has both woven and knitwear manufacturing facility catering to top brands like Hugo Boss, Izod, Polo, CK, Zara, Target, Fcuk, Holister, H&M, A&F, Liz Claiborne, Nike, Addidas, Gap, Guess etc. The export units in India are facing severe competition not only within the country but from other countries like Bangladesh, China, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Indonesia etc. There is so much competition in terms of pricing that it is practically difficult to involve oneself in other social activities. But the Garment Manufacturing Units (GMU) in Bangalore has taken up the concept of CSR seriously but still has a long way.

Adherence to Indian labor laws, Local industrial norms and compliance to social norms imposed on to them time to time by the importers have led them to implement CSR policy in their supply chain. Here the CSR efforts can be classified under the following heads – Employees, Environment, Community/ Society, Supply Chain and the Customer.

CSR towards Employees

The GMUs in India comes under the purview of Indian Labor Law like several other state and local employment laws that strictly ensures the welfare and wellbeing of the employees. These Laws are strictly in place for GMUs in Bangalore that ensures the welfare and wellbeing of the employees. In India, Labor laws are enacted in consonance with the above principles from the constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other principles recommended by International Labor Organization, from time to time. Some of the important Labor Laws in are as follows.

The Employees Compensation Act, 1923 --- The act was passed in 1923 as a result of increase in diseases, deaths and injuries among the workers due to accidents. This act ensures the liability of an employer to pay compensation to its employee as in the following four conditions

- Personal injury must have been caused to a workman
- Such injury must have been caused by an accident;
- The accident must have arisen out of and in the course of employment; and
- The injury must have result either in death of the workman or his total or partial disablement for a period exceeding 3 days.

Payment of Wage Act, 1936 - In an economy where the labors are deprived of Minimum wage it is necessary to entail an Act that regulates and protects the wages earned by them. The need to protect the wages was felt from the early years to twentieth century, but it was as early as 1925 that a Private Bill called the “Weekly Payment Bill” was introduced in the legislative assembly. The objective of this Act is

- a. To regulate the payment of wages to certain class of people engaged in the industry.
- b. The Act entails every employer the right to draw their wages in currency coins or currency notes and at regular intervals not exceeding one month.
- c. There should not be any unauthorized deduction contrary to deduction permissible under the provision of the Act.

The Act entails the provisions under which deduction can be made from the wages such as fines, deduction for absence from duty, for damage or loss of goods, for house accommodation, for amenities and services supplied, for recovery of advances and loans, for income tax, insurance premium ,etc.

The Minimum Wage Act, 1948 – This act was passed for the welfare of the labors by providing for a minimum limits of wages in certain employments. The Act was passed on 15th March 1948. The objective of the Act is to protect exploitation of the ignorant, less privileged, unorganized member of the society. India became one of the first leading countries in the world to get the minimum standard secured for the workers. Some of the Salient features of the Act are –

This Act provides for the fixation of (a) minimum time rate of wages, b) a minimum piece rate, c) a guaranteed time rate, and d) an overtime rate for different occupations, localities or class of work and for adults, adolescents, children and apprentices.

Factories Act, 1948 – It was only in the later half of the 19th century that India witnessed large scale rise in factory. It was Major Moore, Inspector in chief of the Bombay Cotton Department was the first to raise the question of legislation to regulate the working conditions in factories.

The first Factories Act was codified in 1881 with several amendments. An entirely new Act was passed by the constitution Assembly on 28th August, 1948, which came into force on 1st April 1949.

- a. The Main purpose of this Act was to ameliorate working conditions in factories and to take proper steps for safety, health and welfare of the workers
- b. The Act also regulates the working hours of the workers, which cannot exceed 48 hours per week for an adult.
- c. The Act also entails weekly holidays, compensatory holidays, intervals for rest and extra wages for overtime etc.
- d. The Act also ensures proper use of Machinery, equipment and tools.
- e. The administration of the Act is on central as well as state Government.
- f. This Act also entails proper disposal of waste and effluents and arrangements are made for proper ventilation of fumes, dust, artificial humidification, overcrowding, lighting, drinking water, latrines, urinals and hygienic condition.
- g. The Act also provides safety measures such as fencing of machinery and using of gloves and other protective uniforms during working hours that demands its use.
- h. The Act also contains welfare facilities such as wash rooms, rest rooms, canteens, first aid, shelters, crèches etc for the labors.
- i. The Act also entails that workers should be intimidated about the hazardous or life threats at work place before taking up work.

The Factory Act is an important instrument for the improvement of working conditions among the labor class in our country which in turn is necessary for a happy and motivated worker.

The Employee's State Insurance Act, 1948 - This Act provides schemes for availing social insurance by the laborers. It entails as many as 6 benefits to the ensured employee. The payment of Bonus Act 1965, makes the provision for the payment of bonus and payment of Gratuity Act, 1972 makes provision for the payment of gratuity to the employees covered under the purview of these enactments

Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 – The Act was passed to regulate benefits to women employee for certain period before and after the child birth. This act is tended to achieve social justice to women employees. By the end of the year 1972, the Act was extended to whole of Indian Union. It has been drastically amended in 1988, and the new regulation has been enforced from January 1989. This is a significant piece of Labor legislation exclusively devoted for working women in mines, plantations, and establishments wherein persons are employed for exhibition of equestrian, aerobics and other performance. Some of the salient features of this Act are –

- a. Section 4 of this Act prohibits employment or work by women during six weeks immediately following the day of her delivery or her miscarriage or medical termination of pregnancy.
- b. Even on request received from a pregnant woman, she shall not be given any work above nature, which is likely to cause interference with her pregnancy.
- c. This Act entitles every woman for maternity benefits at the rate of the average daily wage for the actual period of absence.
- d. If a woman entitled to maternity benefit or any other amount under this Act dies before receiving such maternity benefit, it shall be paid to the nominee. In Case of absence of nominee, it will be paid to her legal representative.
- e. There is also provision for medical bonus under certain condition.
- f. In case of medical termination or miscarriage, a woman will be entitled for maternity benefits for a period of six weeks immediately following the day of her miscarriage.

- g. There is also provision under this act that provides benefits to women suffering from illness arising out of pregnancy, delivery, premature child birth, tubectomy operation etc.
- h. This Act also entails a mother of new born infant nursing break in addition to other breaks till the child attains the age of 15 months.
- i. No` employer can dismiss a woman from her job during her period of maternity leave.
- j. This Act makes provision for the appointment of inspectors and penalty for contravention of the Act by employers.

Trade Union Act, 1926 - The Trade union movement in India can be traced back to 1890, when for the first time an association of mill workers was formed in the name of Bombay Millhand Association. But the Movement saw greater intensity after the independence. It was in the year 1920 that the High Court of Madras Textile Labor Union by Binny & Co. granted an injunction restraining the union officials to induce certain workers to break their contracts of employment by refusing return to work. Thus the leaders of the Trade Union found themselves liable to prosecution and imprisonment even if it was a bonafide trade union activity.

It was then felt that some legislative protection is required to safeguard the rights of such trade unions. Mr. N. M. Joshi was instrumental in passing a bill seeking introduction of some measures by the Government for the protection of Trade Union. With much opposition from the employers the Trade Union Act was enforced from 1ST June 1927.

Trade Union means any combination whether temporary or permanent, formed primarily for the purpose of regulating the relations between workmen or between employer and employees or for imposing restrictive conditions on the conduct of any trade or business and includes any federation of two or more trade.

Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972 – An Act to provide for a scheme for the payment of gratuity to employees engaged in factories, mines, oilfield, ports, railway companies, shops or other establishments and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 – This Act aims to provide for the payment of equal remuneration to men and women workers and for the prevention of discrimination, on the ground of sex. Against women in the matter of employment and for matters connected there with incidental thereto. According to the Act, the ‘remuneration’ means the basic wage or salary and any additional emoluments whatsoever payable either in cash or in kind, to a person employed in terms of employment or work done in such employment. In our country an Ordinance namely, the Equal Remuneration Ordinance was promulgated in 1975 to give effect to constitute provisions and the ILO Convention number 100 of 1951 in the international women year. The Ordinance was replaced by Equal Remuneration Act, 1976.

Employment Law covers all rights and obligations within the employer employee relationship. Because of the complexity of employment relationship and wide variety of problems and issues employment law involves legal issues as diverse as discrimination, wrongful termination, wages, taxation and work place safety. Many of these issues are governed by applicable laws at Union and State level. These Acts or Laws require amendments and modification with the fast changing world. Although there are numerous Act passed by the Central Government and State Governments which comes under the frame work of social security legislation in our country, a few Acts that deals with providing a better work place or work culture in an organization are discussed above with a historical overview

The GMUs (exports) in India are again governed by various social Compliance norms imposed on to them time to time by the buyer they work with. WRAP certifications alone have shown an upward swing. In 2006, nearly 58 companies had been certified under WRAP. And in 2008, the figure has apparently crossed the 100 mark. The most effective and auditable code of conduct appreciated by the buyer is Social Accountability

8000 (SA8000). Many Garment Manufacturing units have learnt the fact that if they have to be in business the working conditions of their work place have to improve and this has motivated them to adopt SA8000. Some of the major standards that are followed by GMU in Bangalore as a strategic CSR efforts are Social Accountability 8000 (SA8000), Business Social Compliance Initiatives (BSCI), Worldwide Responsible Accredited Production (WRAP), Ethical Trade Initiative (ETI), AA 1000, OHSAS. The above mentioned Social compliance ensure Fair Remuneration, proper working conditions, equal opportunities and on job development, freedom of association, employees participation in decision making, abolition of child labor, maternity benefit etc. Adherence to such social compliance is a part of CSR initiatives.

In addition to the above mentioned Employment Law or other social compliance, GMUs in India have displayed a greater interest in safeguarding the welfare of their employees and their CSR initiatives towards their employees and society at large. These CSR initiatives can be broadly classified under the headings as Education, Health & Welfare, Infrastructure, Environment and Sustainable livelihood, Women empowerment and Supply chain / business to business activities.

Education

Child labor is not only abolished but companies are also taking initiatives in funding educational grants to schools and educational establishments in the nearby villages for the education of the children of their employees as well as to the society. Their vision is to pay back to the society from where they earn. The companies have adopted educational scholarships for the employees' children. Some companies also provide continuing education both for their employees as well as the dropouts in the nearby villages. Some companies also provide basic school facilities like study table, benches, playing equipment, uniforms, note books, uniforms etc. in order to encourage more and more students to join the school. The school students are also provided with several skill building activities like basic computer education, spoken English, tailoring skills etc. for their progress. Some companies also provide scholarships to the bright students of their employees in order to encourage them for future education.

Health and Welfare

As the saying goes – Health is Wealth; GMUs have always strived to take care of the health of their employees through various health insurance schemes that aids them to take proper medical aids at the time of need. Employment State Insurance Corporation scheme is offered by almost all the companies. Under this scheme employees are provided with Medical benefits, Sickness Benefits and Maternity Benefit, Disablement Benefit, Dependent's Benefit and other benefits like funeral expenses and Confinements Expenses. In addition, the scheme also provides some other need based benefits to insured workers like vocational rehabilitation, physical rehabilitation, old age medical care etc. Regular health awareness camps, camps for pregnant women, free eye checkup camps are organized time to time for the benefit of the employees, their family members and also for the society. Companies also conduct HIV awareness program for spreading the awareness among the society. Special attention is given to spread awareness about health and nutrition and its importance for a non-anemic healthy society. Majority of the companies provide transportation facility to the working class to commute between their workplace and home. Some companies situated in the city provide residential accommodation and dormitories to the migrant workers. Many companies have developed their factories in the villages nearby Bangalore that supports recruitment, employment and training in the rural area.

Infrastructure

The Textile and Garment Industry in India have always contributed to the developing infrastructure especially in and around their units. Many slum areas are developed into residential areas with proper sanitation and other basic needs. The companies are seen donating funds to build and renovate schools in the nearby villages, repair roads and drainage and sewage systems, built bus shelters etc.

Environment and Sustainable Livelihood

The Companies in Bangalore are seen to invest considerably to safeguard the wellbeing of the environment by resolving to a sustainable production. They have factories that are carbon neutral, use natural source of energy as much as possible. To achieve the goal of ecological sustainability the raw materials and final product meet different regulatory standards like Oekotex / Eco Tex 100, Reach – Regulation of European Union, GOTS, RSL – Restricted substances list standards etc. In an effort to reduce carbon emission and save energy, LDO boilers are replaced with briquette boiler, electric iron box are replaced by steam irons, electronic ballasts instead of copper /aluminum chokes and harvest rain water. ETP (Effluent Treatment Plant) and STP (Sewage Treatment Plant) are in place for treating water and recycling it and re using the water back by the factories. In an effort recycled plastics and papers are used for poly bags and cartons. Some companies are also practicing rain harvesting as well as solar energy implementation. Tree plantations, development and maintenance of parks are a common feature in this effort of sustainable and ecological support.

Women Empowerment

In Indian Garment industry three out of four workers in the sewing line are women. In Indian context women are not well educated like men. Women in India are not well educated like men, hence manufacturers in Bangalore conduct educational modules in the area of general education, nutrition and hygiene, communication, decision making, safety, leadership, time management, stress management, financial literacy etc. These sessions help women to develop self confidence and self-esteem, improve communication with co – workers and family and also reduce absenteeism. Women are more preferred in the sewing floor for reasons like better dexterity, sincerity and commitment but this indirectly provides job opportunity to the women and gain financial independence. Companies also practice work life or family friendly policies that facilitates both women and men to devote more productive time while at work. The companies provide Crèche and Day care facility to their employees with full time in house doctor for the safety of their ward. New mothers are allowed to avail breaks during work hours for breast feeding over and above the maternity leave. Some companies also provide lactation station and feeding facilities for the new mother. Child care benefits are provided for both men and women with a little extra benefit for the women. In a patriarchal society, sexual harassment and abuse at the hands of the supervisors and seniors were very common among the worker class. But now, companies have adopted strong Anti-Harassment policy which showcases has zero tolerance for sexual harassment, racial or national origin harassment, verbal abuse etc. This policy is extended to the employees, vendor, agent and other third party. Any form of violation will lead to disciplinary action and may also result in removal from the role. Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, enables women to get paid maternity leave for three months. During pregnancy, special care is taken by the company not to allocate work that can interfere with her pregnancy. Women ensured under ESCI scheme can avail maternity benefit as well as child care benefit. Over time is a regular scenario in the garment industry with short lead time and even shorter fashion cycle. But overtime duty is purely voluntary and is paid twice the regular entitled amount. Some of the company also work and train the women in the local areas and create job opportunity for them. They also work with local craftsman like Lambani women from Hampi to enhance their creativity and skills and to make them independent. Regular counseling is provided to the women employees to deal with day to day problems and stress, premarital counseling, marital counseling and lessons to live a dignified life.

Supply Chain/business to business activities

Almost all garment manufacturing units believe in development of long term partnerships with customers and suppliers. Many manufacturing units are organizing vendor training programs on various subjects like quality management etc. Few manufacturing units also have system in place for vendor evaluation and feedback mechanism for them to become more socially responsible. Most of the manufacturing units comply with industry best practices and have adopted technologies like Lean and 5S. Almost all factories are ISO 9001 certified and maintaining expected quality management systems.

Conclusion

The Indian Garment manufacturers, accepts the social accountability responsibilities and strives to implement it. The fact that, the companies should look beyond their own interest of producing profit and give back to the community to those who make this business possible. To ensure that Indian industrial law or employment law or other company or buyer specific social compliance are adhered to by the manufacturers, third part audit have been increased. The CSR first initiates from the within the company's premises and then its spreads to the society and the environment. The CSR initiatives by the Garment industry at large can be classified under the headings of, CSR initiatives towards the – Employees, Education, Health and welfare, Infrastructure, Environment and sustainable livelihood, Women empowerment and Supply Chain/ business to business activities. Companies have realized that CSR and Business strategy are not antagonistic to each other. With this, the companies are continuously seen delivering their service to the society and this starts at the companies premises and this in turn serves the society. CSR toward their employees itself is the giant steps to the society which is discussed above. The small, medium and big size manufacturing units in Bangalore employs approximately 9 lakhs of employees from the lower strata of the society. This has alleviated much unemployment in the society. As these companies are spreading to the outskirts of Bangalore, new areas are being explored and developed. This again leads to training and creating of new sets of work force. These companies not only arrange health camps, education facilities, and counseling sessions to their employees but also extends it to the society nearby. Empowering women, creating job opportunities for the weaker sections of the society is in itself a giant step. Sustainable and eco logical production efforts put in by these companies is for the society as a whole. As a means to provide entertainment to the society the companies also fund social and religious programs and other local events. The companies also support the local NGOs for the possible subcontracting of work and generation of employment. The truth lies in the fact that these initiatives in which every level leads to the development and wellbeing of the society at large.

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The Realities of Rebuilding the Iconic 'Made in Britain' Label

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Abstract

The 'Made in Britain' label was once a proud boast of the UK apparel industry with a long heritage of yarn, textile and garment manufacturing in the country. However, UK garment manufacturing experienced periods of significant decline, firstly between 1978 and 1983, secondly between mid 1990s to the mid 2000 (Jones & Hayes, 2004) due to the increasingly competitive off shore production. The UK High Street had always been a vibrant model for the rest of the world, with many iconic British brands at all levels of the market. Perhaps some of the most recognised names are Marks and Spencer, Mulberry, Burberry and Barbour: these brands used to make exclusively in Britain during the boom years of British apparel manufacturing. Although the retail market for UK apparel rose steadily with the development of fashion own brands including Next, Jigsaw, Whistles and Marks and Spencer (Moore, 1995), production was taken offshore from the 1980s onwards due to better margins gained through lower offshore wages and production costs.

Since 2010 there has been a sustained campaign targeted both at consumers and industry by the British trade press such as *Drapers*, and by television personalities including retail guru Mary Portas. Such high profile media coverage has led brands and retailers alike to reconsider their sourcing strategies and investigate the business case for UK garment production once again.

The paper will assess the demand and market for goods 'Made in the UK' using case studies from iconic British Brands such as J Barbour and Sons and Johnstons of Elgin, plus an evaluation of the key factors required for success in returning garment manufacturing to the UK. Interviews with manufacturers of apparel in the UK, was key to the study, following their presentations at an industry conference, 'Made in the UK', held in September 2012 in Manchester. Jones and Hayes (2004) indicated that there was little chance of large scale domestic retailing returning to the UK, but identified that niche markets may continue to flourish. The study will aim to establish whether this is still true.

Introduction

According to the British Fashion Council (BFC, 2010) the value of UK fashion manufacturing has fallen by two-thirds since 1995. Increasingly skilled off-shore labour, freight and import costs, combined with continued pressure to deliver fast fashion, has driven the sourcing of apparel from overseas. The key manufacturing bases for much of the apparel on sale in the UK today is China, India, Eastern Europe including Poland and the Czech Republic, and the near African countries including Turkey and Morocco. Ironically overseas demand for 'Made in the UK' goods and the quality of fabrics and garments made by UK manufacturers has boosted interest in UK suppliers in recent times. This has led to a dilemma for those wishing to source UK manufacturers: many companies have closed their factories, only retaining a design and sampling service in the UK. Machinery has been sold off, or in the case of Nottingham Lace makers Guy Birkin, has been shipped out en masse to China to be installed in a Chinese factory. Skilled labour is now an issue, as those previously employed in the garment manufacturing sector in the UK have found employment elsewhere or have retired, and fewer younger workers are being trained (BFC, 2010).

Concurrently quintessential British brands such as Burberry, Paul Smith and Mulberry increased their overseas market share considerably: the industry ranks as the 15th largest (out of 81) in the UK (BFC, 2010). Mulberry in particular saw considerable growth in between 2010 and 2011, when their stock rose 527 percent and the company's profits more than quadrupled to £17.1 million pounds in 2010. However, this was not due entirely to apparel sales, but its accessories lines.



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She has worked in academia for 20 years, at institutions including Nottingham Trent University and Staffordshire University. Prior to taking up her current post in 2003, she was an Assistant Professor in the Institute of Textile and Clothing, at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and MA Fashion & Textile Design course leader. In 2009 she spent a term in Mauritius, working with the Government to establish a Fashion and Design Institute in the country. Her specialism is colour and in particular, colour forecasting, having worked as a consultant with Global Colour Research for several years on their fashion forecasts. Julie is also the Events Committee Chairman for the ASBCI trade Association, a member of the Colour Group (GB) and has contributed two chapters to recent publications on the topic of colour trends in fashion. She is an academic consultant on a variety of fashion and textiles related subjects and recently became a member of SATRA's Governing Body for Textiles.

'The right "It" bag can set off a global buying frenzy which in turn, boosts shareholder profits. So it is with Mulberry Group, the British luxury apparel and accessories brand which has become the world's best-performing fashion retail stock over the past year.' (Dishman, 2011)

All the products are handmade in the company's British Somerset factory, which celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2011, and which the company states it is committed to continuing. Its apprentices work in the Somerset factory over an eighteen month period, but also have a theory day taught by staff from the local Bridgewater College. Fifty eight applied for the first 10 traineeships on offer so the competition is stiff, but the apprentices know that the company is committed to retaining at least 30% of its production in the UK (Kingston, 2007).

Not all British brands are as fortunate as Mulberry though, having a skilled workforce and high value product range manufactured in the UK, but some are now capitalizing on their British made heritage, using it as a marketing tool to promote their products.

Made in The UK Media Profile

The apparel sector is the UK's most successful manufacturing industry, with total revenues of \$22.9 billion in 2011, equivalent to 60.7% of U manufacturing, however it is anticipated that it will decline between 2012 and 2016 (Marketline, 2012). The prediction is not new; in general UK apparel production has been in decline since the late 1970's (Jones and Hayes, 2004), but arguably there has never been a better time to promote British manufactured goods due to the international successes of iconic designer brands including Burberry, Mulberry, Paul Smith, Alexander McQueen and Church's. Ironically many of these brands are no longer British owned, but still trade on their iconic British heritage, and even the UK high street is beginning to become more aware of domestic consumers demanding British manufactured goods. This can in part be attributed to media campaigns, and in particular, a British television series aired at the beginning of 2012.

The British Retail Guru Mary Portas in *Mary's Bottom Line*, a three-part Channel 4 series, exploited what she believed was a window of opportunity to revive UK manufacturing as oil, cotton and overseas labour prices continued to rise. Portas reopened a factory in Middleton, Lancashire, to train British machinists, and commercially manufacture underwear made from products entirely sourced within the UK. The products were called Kinky Knickers and were launched, following the initial airing of the television series, in February 2012 at the quintessentially British department store, Liberty. Initially the programme employed 8 apprentice machinists, and the former floor managers from the closed Headon and Quarby factory, which had ironically been mothballed whilst the company shifted its garment production offshore. A supplier of lace in Nottingham was found for the knickers and the orders began to flood in as the series progressed. Portas employed her marketing knowledge and industry contacts to great effect and estimated the factory would need to produce 30,000 pairs of knickers per year to be sustainable...Today the factory employs 14 apprentices and supplies British retailers Asos, Liberty, House of Fraser and even Marks and Spencer, famous for its own underwear lines. Portas was thrilled with the results, saying: "People say manufacturing will never come back, but you can make it come back. Marks & Spencer sells 61 million pairs of knickers a year: all imported. Put a million of those back into the UK. Sort it out!" (Betts, 2012)

The campaign appeared to gain much of its success due to the British public supporting the notion of British made products, which were championed so well by Portas. The campaign received considerable coverage in the British media and almost a year after its launch; the factory is still producing the underwear and has had to employ additional staff due to the volume of orders. Portas believes the success story can be replicated with a variety of apparel with the backing of major retailers.

"I could go out into the street and replicate this success 10 times over. We have a real opportunity here. We have, at most, a decade to get manufacturing back on its feet, otherwise all the experienced professionals will be retired, gaga or dead. What do these people need? They need to be trained; they need a sense of belonging. That's what UK manufacturing's about, not competing with China. We don't need to compete. We can create something else. (Betts, 2012).

The momentum appeared to continue with a number of industry facing conferences and seminars promoting the benefits of manufacturing apparel in the UK. In December 2012 department store Debenhams announced it was to launch a new product range under the label 'Made by Great Britons' which aims to support British manufacturing. Additionally the company has made a pledge to stock more clothing and homeware made exclusively in the UK. All products will be labeled with a Union Jack displayed prominently to emphasise the origin. The British government is also pledging government support to reinvigorate UK textile manufacturing. Secretary of state for business, innovation and skills Vince Cable said:

"There is a growing momentum behind bringing back substantial parts of the textile industry to the UK. It was an industry that almost died in Britain, although there are some high-quality specialist firms that have survived. "I am now picking up that the economics of the industry are changing, and very much welcome the initiatives of the big retailers to start sourcing in the UK where possible."

(www.fashionunited.com, 2012)

The success can be attributed in part to the sense of national pride associated with the Olympics, Paralympics and The Queen's Diamond Jubilee, all taking place in 2012. The UK government also launched an international campaign, Great Britain, which promoted Britain and its industries worldwide. Such support from Government is naturally welcome in the face of increasing competition from offshore production, but does not guarantee production will return to UK shores in any great volume. Indeed Vince Cable had also commented in October 2012:

'We are not going to subsidise this. It is down to the industry. But there are things the Government can do in terms of training, apprenticeships and co-investing through regional growth funds. We have ways of helping' (Hills, 2012)

Strategies for Manufacturing in the UK

One company who have always manufactured in the UK are Johnstons of Elgin. Their Managing Director, James Dracup, referred to the company's 215 years of manufacturing in the UK at a recent conference in 'Made in the UK', organized by trade association the ASBCI (Association of Suppliers to the British Clothing Industry) in Manchester, September 2012. Johnstons manufacture yarns, fabrics and garments, mainly for the luxury end of the market. They still utilize some traditional methods of manufacturing, such as natural teasels to card their cashmere, and much of the work is labour intensive. His rationale for the success of the business over the years focused on four key factors:

1. Developing Export Markets
2. Design and Innovation
3. Quality
4. Production Flexibility

The company also look for niche markets, ideally with an emotional attachment to the Made in Scotland label and for customers who value services, provenance and authenticity: 75% of the business is private label customers and the remaining 25% is sold under the Johnstons of Elgin label, either in their 3 stores (in Hawick, Elgin and St Andrews), via mail order and online, or in independent niche retailers who sell the products worldwide. Over 30% of all product is exported directly but the company estimates that probably over 70% of the products manufactured in the UK are ultimately sold to consumers overseas.

At J. Barbour & Sons Limited are a similar company, with a long heritage of manufacturing in the UK and a well known brand. Ian Sime, their director of supply chain, agrees with the sentiments from James Dracup. Commitment to heritage, society and particularly to the South Shields region of the UK, where Barbour has been manufacturing its iconic wax jackets since 1894, underpins the company's business philosophy. At its South Shields head office it employs 95 people and a further 160 at its factory 100 metres down the road. Ian Sime pointed to two key factors in the company's on-going success. First its UK factory,

JBS Manufacturing Limited, is a separate financial, legal entity and is treated as a third party supplier. He explained:

“Employees are incentivised, not as individuals, but on a factory basis and we have invested in efficiency by introducing an Eton handling system. The factory receives the same technical support and QC checks as our other third party suppliers. As a result UK factory efficiency is running at over 90%.” (ASBCI, 2012).

The second factor is sustainability. JBS Manufacturing opened a Barbour Academy in conjunction with their local Further Education provider, Hartlepool College. The aim of the Academy is to sustain the manufacturing skills in the region, offering local employment and allowing Barbour to continue to develop its local manufacturing legacy. Students from the college are guaranteed an interview at the end of their studies and some have already gone onto jobs in the South Shields manufacturing unit, thus ensuring a strong and constant supply of skilled workers for the company.

Whilst initiatives such as those from Johnstons, Mulberry, Barbour and other premium priced brands may be easier to establish with larger branded companies, small manufacturing units are still being formed in the UK to supply high street stores who are increasingly looking to return some production to Britain. Jenny Holloway, a former buyer with Littlewoods and Arcadia, is now director of Fashion Enter Limited and dedicated to helping young people develop their careers in the fashion industry. She believes retailers should support UK manufacturers in a bid to get more young people into the industry. She is actively supporting the drive back to UK apparel manufacturing by encouraging retailers to use the ‘Fashion Studio’ based at the Knowledge Dock at the University of East London, UEL, for design and sample making and then its factory situated in London’s Florentia Clothing Village. Its 34 sewing and technical staff is already producing up to 5,000 units per week for such clients as asos.com, John Lewis, Oasis and Top Shop. The Fashion Studio is also home to a new 18 month Fashion and Textiles Apprenticeship Programme that she is running in conjunction with the University of East London (UEL) and employers. Asos.com and New Look have supported the programme which equips young people with the technical skills necessary to support UK-based manufacturing. She explained:

“It’s about succession planning for tomorrow and developing a sustainable and reliable workforce.” (ASBCI, 2012).

This is a view echoed by a small manufacturing unit based in Leicester, where job creation and boosting the economy is one of: “Six very sound reasons why retailers should switch the balance of their purchasing from overseas to UK designers and manufacturers” explained Sangita Khan, creative director with Leicester-based volume jersey and knit garment manufacturer Buff Clothing Limited at the ASBCI conference. She set up her family business 13 years ago after obtaining her degree in fashion design and a spell in industry. Her clients now include JD Williams, Matalan, Next and River Island. The other five reasons to buy British made goods are somewhat different to those cited by Johnstons:

- Local manufacturers can offer immediate response to changes in design or production criteria.
- Reaction to fashion trends dictated by celebrity and social media;
- Faster communication
- On-hand mid-production problem solving;
- Quick repeat production on best sellers.
- Consumer demand for ‘quality’ Made in the UK products.

At the ASBCI ‘Made in the UK’ conference, the delegates were interested to hear from a variety of speakers each with different experiences of what it means to manufacture in the UK today. The area all four organizations highlighted in the paper would agree upon is ensuring sustainability is built in to the UK manufacturing sector, training new, younger staff and bringing them into the business to eventually replace those older and more experienced members of the workforce. The British Fashion Council recognizes the need to attract more young people to the industry where employment levels in terms of menswear and womenswear production are the largest sources of employment, together accounting for over 400,000 jobs, or just under

half of all the jobs directly created by the fashion industry (BFC, 2010). The picture is not as strong for UK apparel manufacturing as it is in some other European countries; in France and Germany apparel manufacturing is higher than in the UK, and Eastern European countries such as Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Czech Republic are forecasted to increase their manufacturing base further as they provide a compromise for many UK retailers, with comparably lower labour rates than the UK and a proximity to the UK market (Marketline, 2012).

Conclusions

The British clothing and textile industry and Government alike acknowledge the challenges that face the continued success of the sector. Responding to change, sourcing new markets and developing younger staff to replace an ageing workforce are some of the initiatives already evident. However, the British Fashion Council also highlighted other areas which may adversely affect the strength of the industry going forward.

'In textiles and manufacturing, there is lack of linkage with the UK's scientific and technical innovations, a slow pipeline of talent and the threat to ongoing support for apprentice schemes to transfer skills to younger generations.' (BFC, 2010).

Naturally, some of the challenges are being met by Higher Education institutions in the UK, in particular in the scientific and technical innovations, and technical textiles is now one of the UK industry's major textile growth areas. Apprenticeships are being pioneered by organizations such as Mulberry and Barbour, linking with local colleges to produce the next generation of skilled workers, or in the case of Fashion Enter Limited, working with UEL to develop specific qualifications for its' apprentices.

Niche markets, as suggested by Jones and Hayes in 2004, are still cited as one method of developing business and ensuring sustainable production in the UK. Media covering and initiatives to buy British, as promoted by Mary Portas and Debenhams are encouraging domestic consumers to be more aware of the country of origin of apparel, and also helping them to buy British made goods where they can. Events such as the ASBCI's 'Made in the UK' conference should continue to deliver information and inspiration to those who would like to invest in UK manufacturing for the future, and coupled with Government backing perhaps the Made in Britain label could see a real resurgence in the coming years. It would appear from the evidence that if the momentum from all sources continues that manufacturing in the UK should be sustainable for many years to come.

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Fashion's new world order: Reinventing the iconic fashion system

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Abstract

This paper addresses the iconic and established business model that has evolved in the fashion industry, which embraces the constructs of fast fashion, high frequency drops into retail stores and the associated relationships with seasonal appropriateness and design analysis. These issues provide for the timely consideration of alternate business systems that will support positive and sustainable practices within the fashion industry.

Over the past fifty years there has been a radical shift in the system of fashion; fast disposable fashion is now the norm rather than the exception. Fashion has moved from an historical formulaic process of two significant collections a year of spring/summer and autumn/winter, to multi layered delivery drops on a fast track turn around. The year is punctuated by the constant flow of new product that quickly fills floor space in anticipation of quick turn around sales. Major retail outlets now have over-arching markdown strategies embedded into their buying systems and fashion obsolescence is a reality of the industry. The contemporary business model for most of the millions employed within the modern day fashion sector is an exceptionally fast paced industry, where a team scans the world for styling ideas, adapted from those that already exist so as to reinterpret as their own. Ideas from all tiers of the fashion world are reinvented and regurgitated into variations on a theme.

For the future of the industry to survive and prosper a new iconic model of creating fashion needs to be well thought-out. There is value in reconsidering the current practice and the implementation of more purposeful processes that address the concerns associated with fast fashion frameworks and excess consumption. This paper proposes an iconic business model for the future that embodies reinvigorated design development models and an alternate fashion calendar, which foster methods that enable reflection and analysis and an understanding of appropriateness to the market within sustainable frameworks.

Background

The global fashion industry evolved over the past century based around iconic business models that focused on the designer or creative director having the pivotal role within a company and then key departments including production, marketing and sales, finance and administration and distribution linking it through the supply chain.¹ The halcyon days of two collections per year based on the fashion calendar of spring/summer and autumn/winter meant that the teams aligned with developing fashion ranges worked towards these two peak time frames. The last forty years has seen a dramatic and significant shift in the conventional business model established in the fashion industry. A romantic and nostalgic construct of how fashion works is the vision of the creative designer working within an atelier style studio; with a muse for inspiration and an adept hand as quick ink drawings are realised on paper in readiness to be interpreted into masterpieces by a plethora of white coated patternmakers, seamstresses and finishers. This is a vision splendid of a bygone era.

Fast track to 2013 and by contrast the more realistic business model for most of the millions employed within the modern day fashion sector is an exceptionally fast paced industry, where a team scans the world for styling ideas that already exist so as to adapt them and reinterpret as their own. Ideas from all tiers of the fashion world are reinvented and regurgitated into variations on a theme. Fashion has shifted from an



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Karen has held numerous Board positions including a founding board member of the Melbourne Fashion Festival. She currently sits on the Boards of Melbourne Spring Fashion Week, Balletlab and the Federal Government's Positive Body Image Awards Advisory Panel. In 2010 Karen was appointed the first female Board Director of the Council of Textile & Fashion Industries of Australia (TFIA) and as part of this role has been appointed the Chair of the Australian Fashion Council. More recently she has been on the Advisory Boards for State of Design Festival, the Design Research Institute and the Media Code of Conduct Working Group on Body Image for the Victorian State Government.

Karen worked as a fashion designer for over ten years in London, Melbourne and Sydney prior to working in academia. Karen is highly regarded as a trend forecaster, which included representing Li Edelkoort in Australia and consults as a strategic and design expert within the fashion industry.

Keywords: Fast Fashion, Slow Fashion, Iconic Fashion Business Model, Alternate Fashion System, Consumerism, Fashion Calendar

¹ For the purposes of this paper iconic business models are regarded as those that have become established as the normal practice over a reasonable period of time.

historical formulaic process of two significant collections a year, to multi layered delivery drops on a fast track turn around where similar styles are released across the globe simultaneously.

This paper addresses the iconic fashion industry business model that has evolved in the past century and the integrated issues of fast fashion, high frequency drops into retail stores and the associated relationships with seasonal appropriateness and design analysis and as a consequence the timely consideration of alternate business models that will support the future of the fashion industry.

The Contemporary Business Model: Fast Fashion

According to Lars Svendsen; "Fashion is only fashion insofar as it is capable of moving forwards. Fashion moves in cycles, where a cycle is the space of time when a fashion is introduced to when it is replaced by a new one and the principle of fashion is to make the cycle – the space of time – as short as possible, so as to create the maximum number of successive fashions." (Svendsen 2006, p 31) In the world of fashion the race is on for the brand with the latest look, in the fastest turn around and at the best value price. Large-scale corporations battle it out in the state of art production factories across the globe, to adapt the seasonal trends. "The speed, at which a product is made available, is the prerogative of a high tech market, and style makers want to be the first to flaunt it, riding the wave as it reaches its peak. Because a decline is sure to follow setting into an indefinite dormancy; the trend dies out or comes out of oblivion – a recurrence reinvented." (Fashion Forward n.d.)

The yearning to get fashion product created quickly and cheaply contributes to a system where 'speed to market' is given priority over quality product that is unique and market ready. A perturbing model of practice, as it appears the current global system of fashion embodies a lack of reverence for design originality, encourages shortcut-manufacturing processes and embraces product disposability. Online portals have directly connected anonymous product development teams with designers of influence who release their latest looks on international runways enabling a plethora of busied stylists, patternmakers and manufacturers in medium to large scale fashion organisations across the globe to download and translate the key trends into commercial adaptations.

Within this environment, corporations have appropriately streamlined and rationalised their infrastructure and systems to improve their ability to get their on-trend product to market faster and cheaper. This business model has now become entrenched as the 'norm' within the fashion world, a construct that employs significant numbers of people across the globe, within a supply chain based on acceleration, quick response and 'speed to market'. Is there a need to change? When business is flourishing and the mechanisms of supply and demand are in harmony one would question whether there is a need to shift from a dynamic commercial model. The key issue is that in the current climate business is not always thriving and even for those companies who enjoy fiscal success it is at the mercy of the greater good of the world we live in, where there are concerns regarding the increasing environmental and social impacts. The modern day business model of fashion continues despite itself.

The Impact of Excess

Daily those actively engaged in the world of fashion are becoming increasingly aware of the issues facing an industry, which could be considered to be on the precipice of collapse. As summarised by Sass Brown in Eco Fashion;

The clothing and textile industry is one of the largest industries in the world, employing one sixth of the world's population. It uses more water than any other industry apart from agriculture. It discharges toxic chemicals into the environment, uses huge amounts of energy and is a major contributor to global warming. As a design community we share the collective guilt of sweatshops, environmental pollution and child labour. As an industry we lag behind the rest of the art and design community,

where a significant number of architects, interior designers and cosmetic and fragrance companies base their business practices in ethical design. (Brown, 2010 p6)²

Fashion for all its embodiment of speed culture has been slow to catch on. One of the major criticisms of the fashion industry is that the system of constantly changing fashion encourages customers to repeatedly discard last season's clothing to purchase the latest fashions. The reality is that supply is far exceeding demand and we should be considering whether too much is actually too much. Geoffrey B. Small maintains;

Fast fashion, planned obsolescence, ignorance and waste rule. In the UK last year [2009], people threw away over two million tones of fast-fashion clothing that was worn an average of six times. The mountains of plastic and polyester synthetic throwaway apparel are ending up in African landfills where they do not break down, water tables are disrupted and deadly new malaria grow on the still ponds they create. Slave labour is rampant. . . .Bad for the customer, bad for the worker, bad for society and bad for the environment, fashion today is one of the industrial age's biggest human failures. (cited in Brown, 2010 p7)

As the system continues to ramp up and is speeding ahead, is the fashion industry in a position to reverse it or change it? Or more simply we have no choice as the considerable cost to the environment and society cannot be ignored and propositions for a future iconic business model should be considered. Options could include:

- Reinventing or ignoring the fashion calendar
- Only delivering product when its design is fully resolved in readiness for sale
- Developing product that embraces longevity, within the genre of heirloom products
- Embracing slow fashion protocols

Supply and Speed

What if the fashion industry wasn't constricted by a fashion calendar? The fashion seasons are divided by spring/summer and autumn/winter yet the larger chains and department stores function on weekly drops. The year is punctuated by the constant flow of new product that quickly fills floor space in anticipation of quick turn around sales. As promptly as merchandise enters the retail space, it is expected to be hastily consumed. The reality is that chains now have over-arching markdown strategies embedded into their buying systems and fashion obsolescence is a reality of the industry. According to an Inditex (the parent company of fast fashion brand Zara) spokesperson: "New styles are dispatched globally to all stores twice a week. If a design did not sell within a week, it was withdrawn and replaced by a new design." (Ooi 2011) The costs of oversupply go beyond the fiscal issues faced by companies who have to dump sale product often at loss there is also the significant environmental impact. "Every year, billions of dollars of excess inventory are moved through the supply chain at a great expense to the manufacturers, distributors and retailers selling the goods. In addition to the drag on corporate earnings, excess inventories also have a negative contribution to the environment by unnecessarily consuming energy during the manufacturing, transportation and warehousing efforts." (Keifer n.d.)

Excessive supply is united with another controlling pillar of the current accepted fashion business models, the fast turn around of product from concept to retail. The quest for speed has seen designs be realised into retail merchandise and delivered into store in time frames as tight as ten days. This pattern has been spearheaded by global chains such as Zara, H&M and Topshop. In recent years these mega chains have penetrated global markets. Analysing the impact of Zara, the online website *Punch* comments: "What really marks Zara as an oddity, a stunningly successful oddity, in the clothing world is the way the brand has dramatically shortened the fashion life cycle. Zara's commercial dexterity to mimic runway fashion and

² The author notes that the issues described delve into the broader and significant topic of fashion ethics, which is not the key focus of the paper but does provide entrée for subsequent enquiry.

emerging street trends is largely unparalleled, meaning, new looks can make their way from the sketchpad to store shelves in two weeks flat.” (Elser 2011)

Why is that the fashion industry has adopted a system where product is released into the market based purely on a calendar requirements, not consumer demand or product readiness? In parallel industries the time devoted to design development is purposefully considered so that sufficient review and analysis takes place to refine an idea, often test it the market and produce to a quality level that will align to customer needs. Does an architect release concepts and models before they are perfected, would a high profile electronics company release a new toaster before it has been resolved? In the rare circumstance that the answer may be yes, this would not be regarded as a positive work practice in those creative industries. A fashion product development team by contrast is required to provide a constant flow of ideas for not one product but mass collections that are developed in the fastest creation time frame of any design industry.

A typical large-scale chain will develop numerous collections that are dropped into store on weekly basis with a limited sell-through period. As detailed on the website *Ethical Fashion Forum* quoting from a Cambridge University study; “...in 2006, people were buying a third more clothes than they were in 2002. Brands began competing against each other for market share by introducing more lines per year at lower costs, culminating in a situation where ‘fashion houses now offer up to 18 collections a year’ and the low cost, so called ‘value end’ is ‘booming; doubling in size in just 5 years. This naturally has led to pressure on the supply chain.” (*Fast Fashion is Like Fast Food*, n.d.) This process denies designers the ability to carefully consider, test, reflect and perfect their ideas. Equally it is a denigrating process where once released the assumption is made that the design efforts are transitory and of no lasting value with a limited shelf life. Any product that is still in store after two months (and sometimes shorter) is regarded as mark down material. Sandy Black states; “The desire to be fashionable for constant change and review expresses itself in all areas of contemporary lifestyles, have created over-consumption and obsolescence.” (Black 2008, p17)

Interestingly, no other creative industry works to a distinct and controlling calendar that demands development of ideas within an unrealistic time frame, often launched prior to designers being satisfied with the results. No longer do fashion designers work with a halcyon framework of just two collections per year. The only other industry that works with this level of disposability and abandonment is the food industry. Food by contrast is directly linked to sustenance and the reasoning behind high levels of disposability is straightforwardly ‘in sync’ with the potential changes that lead to contamination and the viable time frame for consumption. Clothes do not require a use-by-date, although millions of advertising and marketing dollars are spent on encouraging consumers to believe they need to renew their wardrobes constantly.

Certainly, the food industry responds from a framework of constant supply and to seasonal demands but this is generally distinct to delivering newly designed product because of calendar dictates as opposed to consumer demand or product readiness. Arguably, some food product is delivered in time for special occasions such as Christmas, Valentine’s Day and Easter but this does not compare with the complex delivery timeframes of ‘fast fashion’ on a weekly basis. As a comparable construct fashion could adopt some of the food industry’s systems, delivering on demand, pricing on seasonality and accessibility, ‘buy now – consume now’ principals and specialist products aligned to special events. Also like the food industry optional product lines based on slow and organic principles could offer the consumer alternate choice.

The Impact on all Sectors

The constructs of fast fashion and excess supply could be assumed to be the domain of mass-produced volume fashion; where the concepts of quick response, fast turnaround and market readiness put pressure on the industry. In the premium sector of the fashion market the concept of excess and speed has also increasingly become an issue. The late Alexander McQueen, an exceptional designer addressed the issue of the fashion industry churning out merchandise on a constant basis; “*This whole situation is such a cliché. The turnover of fashion is just so quick and so throwaway, and I think that is a big part of the problem. There is no longevity.*” (*The Real McQueen 2009*) *There is a belief within the fashion industry that the pressures of the fashion industry were directly linked to McQueen’s suicide in 2010.*

Stefano Tonchi, editor of *T*, the *New York Times Style Magazine* claims;

We all know that this is a very critical moment in fashion and that basically he [McQueen] is the first victim of what is a conflict between creativity and business. Today to be a fashion designer, you have to be a superman or superwoman... When McQueen began in fashion, designers worked on two or three collections a year. Now you have to be a business manager, a marketer. It's, what? Eight, ten, fifteen collections a year. Men's, women's, couture, diffusion. Then they want accessories. Then they want watches. Then they want jewelry. It's a machine, and I think that killed him. (Yuan 2010)

As further purported on the website *Disegno* in relation to the downfall of Christian Dior's Creative Director – John Galliano and McQueen's death:

The fashion system of biannual collections, licensing deals and franchises that Dior created and the publicity machinery that fuelled it all has been a hotly debated topic over the last year. Is the pace of fashion too fast and is its aggressive commercial growth damaging to the people working within it? London-based fashion designer Alexander McQueen's much-publicised suicide in 2010 was explained partly by the unrealistic pace of creation and demand for innovation, Galliano's substance abuse and racist ramblings blamed as a side-effect of the same. (Agerman and Verghese 2011)

Galliano and McQueen have a history of exceptional and innovative talent; their abilities should be heralded and nurtured as part of the established business models in the fashion industry. If the established models of practice contributed to their demise, then it is a resounding wake up call to the industry that the mechanisms driving it are simply not right. Is it possible to create an iconic business model that promotes unique and innovative product that is developed without timing constraints and the consequence pressure this puts on those working in the fashion industry?

Understandably, a change to the business models away from the existing fashion calendar decrees would create a mammoth cultural shift across the industry. One of the key controlling constructs is that fashion weeks have a core focus on spring/summer autumn/winter, which is a potentially outmoded concept. Seasonal benchmarks are no longer as relevant as they have been historically. Within a global market when similar product is released across the world simultaneously seasonal releases do not correlate to homogeneous weather patterns. Possibly major fashion weeks could be re-conceptualised so their purpose is not related to the release of seasonal collections. This is not a radical shift as the traditions of major fashion weeks, scheduled twice yearly, are already starting to blur from a buying model to a marketing model.

The Role of Fashion Weeks

The purpose of fashion weeks is shifting from their origins as salon show events presented to key buyers and clients that provide a selling platform in a timely manner enabling several months for indented orders to be finalised and production runs to be realised. Buying systems have changed. Few orders are placed at the time of a show; in fact orders are now negotiated behind the scenes in showrooms across the globe and in face-to-face appointments with key buying teams. The merchandise in showrooms may capture the essence of what has been shown on a catwalk but often a more commercially viable iteration. The catwalk, by contrast, is increasingly about the spectacle of fashion. A promotional tool to capture the imagination of key media, provide an interface with celebrity endorsements with heightened 'front row fever' and more importantly a direct connection with the public as the online world downloads fashion fantasy onto our accessible digital devices.

With the shift in new modes of communication designers are in a position to use alternate dissemination methods to release their product onto the market. Spearheading change in this arena are the often-quoted labels such as Burberry and Gareth Pugh. Now establishing their practices as the new norm indicates that the time is ripe for a more relevant business model within the fashion industry, morally, environmentally and economically. Rather than the twice yearly pressure to release large scale collections the focus of fashion weeks as a marketing conduit for the brand means that actual collections could be released when ready and according to demand while maintaining interest in the labels brand positioning.

Gareth Pugh continues to challenge the traditional constructs of fashion dissemination by utilising film in collaboration with other creative practitioners as a way of showcasing the mood and concepts behind his collections. An exciting and engaging process that provides insight into his philosophy and the creative vision behind his work. "Gareth Pugh never fails to surprise with his runway shows, and for Fall 2009, he pulled the rug out from under editors by showing them an eight-minute video when they came expecting a runway show. He's not the first in recent seasons, Stefano Pilati, Viktor & Rolf, and the good people at Halston have all dabbled in the format" (Fashionologie 2009)

Likewise, Burberry under the creative direction of Christopher Bailey has shifted the way it engages with fashion weeks across the globe. In 2010 the label continued its reputation as an innovator with the release of the Burberry Retail Theatre Concept where VIP customers in store were able to explore the Spring/Summer collection on iPads. Orders could be placed immediately through a custom-built Burberry app. The media release from Burberry states;

We are really excited to be launching 'Burberry Retail Theatre' enabling the first ever live simultaneous virtual trunk shows in our stores globally. This concept allows us to broadcast our multi faceted content all over the world, directly to our stores, creating a modern and pure brand environment. Customers at the exclusive in-store digital events will experience the clothes, the music, the energy and the atmosphere in real time and have the unique opportunity to receive their orders in just 7 weeks. (cited in Design Scene - Burberry Unveils Retail Theatre Concept 2010)

If the seasonal dictates of fashion weeks focus more on exciting marketing projects that contextualise the designers vision rather than requiring that full collections be developed, this will see a shift in the fashion system. Once the traditional constructs of twice yearly seasonal releases are diffused, it can then translate to the broader fashion industry, affecting department store buying patterns and chain store delivery enabling large-scale organisational shifts. Additional to this is the opportunity for small-scale labels and independent retailers to reassess how they transact. Rather than working to the dictated timetable set by the larger groups there is the potential that smaller businesses have greater flexibility to adopt and adapt to a new business model that is focused on consumer demand and considered product development processes. There are some smaller independent organisations that are implementing alternative processes. Designer labels such as S!X and MaterialByProduct, based out of Australia respectfully release concepts within the framework of the seasonal calendar but their collections evolve from ongoing archetypes that embody and build on the key elements of their overall ethos. They do not need to reinvent new collections from scratch; it is a journey of creative development, rather than distinct reinventions. A process that encourages the purchaser to build onto their existing wardrobe rather than discard and replenish.

Rejecting Overt Consumerism

Current fashion business models are in need of an overhaul and that requires that all stakeholders in the supply chain play an active part in the reconfiguration to move from a arrangement that embeds disposability as the norm. Not only is there a structure of excessive over supply but a consumer culture of constant renewal According to Sandy Black; "Clothing sales have increased by 60% in the last ten years." (Black 2008, p14) When is too much, too much?

There is an emerging cultural shift to which recognises the lack of value in cheap disposable product and acknowledges a contemporary consumer with an increasing awareness of the value of buying less, buying better and caring more. The adoption of slow fashion principals across the globe has shifted from a fringe construct to more organisations; large and small combined with consumers of fashion recognising the need to acknowledge social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts of what they purchase. According to Sandy Black the fashion consumer is responding. She explains that Nike, Gap and Marks and Spencer were accused of being unethical but due to customer reaction they took action. When the larger corporations make even a small difference it is a big step forward, as they are shifting the system. (Black 2008, p17)

A key consideration for addressing the cost of fashion and the total impact of the system is in the Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) of fashion product. Significant analysis has been dedicated to discourse on LCA, defined as consideration of “the entire life cycle of apparel and textiles from raw materials through consumer use and disposal.” (Dickson Locker Eckman 2009) This paper does not interrogate all aspects of LCA, suffice to say that there is an increasing recognition in the need to adopt new business models that evaluate the stages of fashion production and consumption in an effort to reduce negative social, economic and ecological impacts. One of the key aspects of LCA is the consideration of the consumers’ role as an active participant in shifting change in the fashion system. Kate Fletcher speaking at the *Interrogating Fashion* workshop at London College of Fashion in 2005 claims “...according to accepted wisdom ‘80% of a product’s environmental impact is in its design’ but her own research indicates that the greatest environmental impact of clothing is not from its production but from its entire life cycle through laundry and care to disposal.” (Interrogating Fashion, 2005)

A considered opportunity for designers and fashion consumers lies in fashion that embraces longevity, within the genre of heirloom products. Jet Korine, an Icelandic designer has beautifully captured this ethos in her development of ‘life long coats’. “Jet Korine’s work is concerned with very high level of lateral thinking not only in the definition of a garment, but also in the potential of a garment and ultimately the longevity of a garment; ideas completely at odds with many current fashion trends and design.” (Jet Korine Profile n.d.) The concept of life-long or heirloom fashion empowers the consumer to purchase fashion commensurate with his or her own personal style ethos.

The concept of creating fashion that is not discarded shifts the cultural ethos of current business practice. This considered in tandem with the growing popularity of the ‘cost per wear’ construct, which is the simple mathematical equation of assessing the cost of the garment divided by the potential proposed number of times it will be worn. A garment designed and produced to last a lifetime will justifiably be of higher value (utilising this formula) than a cheap purchase from a volume retailer discarded after a couple of wears.

On average, people wear 20% of their wardrobe 80% of the time. ...That’s unsustainable—both financially and environmentally. BUY ONLY WHAT YOU LOVE! That’s the rule. Love it madly, need it badly or put it back. If you love it, you’ll wear it a lot. It’s much smarter to buy the more expensive garment that you’ll wear to death than the cheaper substitute that’s not quite right because it will just end up hanging guiltily in the back of your wardrobe. (Stephenson n.d.)

A more complex analysis of ‘cost per wear’ is the deeper interrogation beyond the monetary costs into the environmental and social costs and the focus on ‘slow’ values when purchasing fashion. This would include buying from local designers that do not perpetuate the fast fashion business model of oversupply and obsolescence, taking into account products that have a reduced carbon footprint through utilisation of local and ecologically produced materials and resources and embracing artisan and fair trade principals.

There is increasing awareness in regard to excessive consumption of fashion as indicated by the increased adoption of ‘not buying new’ or ‘not buying at all’ principals. A plethora of buy nothing days, months, seasons and years plus initiatives like clothing swaps and recycle meets are gaining momentum. Equally the ‘Do It Yourself’ movement sees a nostalgic nod to a bygone era of ‘make do and mend’ (an adage that has snuck back into contemporary vocabulary). The concept of making, mending, customising and adapting fashion by the consumer has established a new genre of fashion. An exciting project initiated by Kate Fletcher and Becky Earley titled *5 Ways* includes as an option for consumers the concept of ‘Updatable’:

Fashion clothes capture a moment in time and are as quickly forgotten. But what if that moment was not one but many moments... a process of transformation? What if that process required you to reach into the sewing kit and update that garment yourself? Updatable is all about a switch in emphasis: from one garment to many garments; from passive consumers to active users. (Earley B, Fletcher K, 2002-2003)

Conclusion - New Era Opportunities

There is a need for a paradigm shift away from the iconic business systems developed last century to a model of practice that can add broader value or reward to the consumer while offering an alternate business construct that can be commercially viable. Larger scale corporations will not be able to change overnight, the cost of introducing new methods and processes are financially precarious and untested within the market. A dual or tiered system could offer opportunities for organisations. Like fashion chain stores have tested the market with 'designer collaborations' while still developing the traditional ranges. There is further opportunity beyond this paper for research into testing the market with new lines that are developed in a different creative construct?

In conclusion although this paper does not provide a full interrogative analysis of the extensive costs of the iconic business models historically embedded within the fashion industry and the value added by alternate systems it highlights however the concerns associated with fast fashion frameworks and excess consumption. As a starting point it is to provide insight plus encourage discussions and further research into the future viability of the industry. Over the past fifty years there has been a radical shift in the system of fashion; fast disposable fashion is now the norm rather than the exception. The intent has not been to romanticise by-gone eras and advocate a shift to the nostalgia of historic industry patterns. For the future of the industry to survive a new iconic model of creating fashion needs to be well thought-out; there is value in reconsidering the current practice and the implementation of slower more purposeful processes. Combined with reinvigorated design development models, which foster methods that enable reflection and analysis and an understanding of appropriateness to the market within sustainable frameworks.

Additional to this, there is opportunity to reassess the fashion calendar reducing the constant supply within the fast fashion sector. For high profile brands whose success has been perpetuated at major global fashion weeks, the decision can be made to work within traditional schedules but possibly use it as an opportunity to showcase ideas and concepts as a promotional and branding exercise rather than full collection release. The consumer also plays a vital role in the viability of the fashion industry's future this could mean adopting practices including: buying less, buying better and purchasing investment or heirloom pieces that are to be kept rather than disposed of. Many of the issues facing the future of the fashion system requires that all along the supply chain from initial textile development, through to design processes, manufacturing and then consumption patterns must be addressed.

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The Digital Flagship Store as a Luxury Brand Icon

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Christopher Moore

Tony Kent

Abstract

Specialty retail formats in the form of flagship stores emerged in the 1990's as a brand's vehicle to present their growing category mix/brand extensions and tap into the emerging retail-entertainment trend (Mores 2007, Bingham 2005, Tungate 2008, Barreneche 2008,). Today flagship stores are evident at all levels of the market from Primark to Prada with the latter evolving the format through their creation of 'epicentres' which offer a unique blend of culture and commerce (Moore et al. 2000, Jones & Doucet 2001, Kozinets et al. 2003, Varley 2007, Doyle et al. 2008, Greene 2011). Since the creation of uber flagships in the beginning of the noughties, the concept has evolved again with a select number of innovative luxury fashion companies who have chosen to differentiate themselves through promoting their online offer as a 'digital flagship' (WWD 2010, VMSSD 2011). The aim of this study is to examine the form and function of this concept. This will be facilitated through the design of a qualitative methodology in the form of in-depth interviews with brand personnel. Furthermore the study will extend research undertaken by Nobbs et al (2012) and their framework for offline flagship store dimensions.

Introduction

Since the concept of the flagship store was first introduced to retailing in the 1970's, both its form and function have evolved considerably (Kozinets et al. 2003, Jones & Doucet 2001, Varley 2005, Moore et al. 2000, Nobbs et al 2012). In the last decade the term flagship has become ubiquitous with every luxury fashion brand claiming to have multiple flagship stores in their global retail portfolio (WGSN 2012). In a parallel timeframe and within the same sector e-commerce has dramatically increased and this has been a key driver in the growth of the 'digital flagship store' (DFS) concept (Nobbs et al 2012). Just as there is lack of empirical research into the form and function of the traditional bricks and mortar flagship, so too is there a dearth of academic understanding about this emerging online format. The aim of this research is to explore the motives and methods of creating and adopting a DFS within the luxury fashion sector.

The rationale for undertaking the research in this sector is because the flagship store concept has been prolifically adopted by Luxury fashion brands (Bingham 2005). Furthermore, luxury brands offer a significant economic contribution, have a rapidly growing customer segment and have traditionally avoided collapse (Beverland 2004).

Two additional interesting driving forces of the growth of this concept are the increasing homogenisation of store image and design identified by Morgan (2011), and Pegler (2011) whereby they suggest consumers are demanding more differentiated experiences both online and offline. Secondly, and this is very recent is the concept of 'showrooming' whereby consumers visit a store to tangibly experience the product, but then the actual purchase is made online either via mobile, tablet or personal computer (WGSN 2012).

Literature Review

In order to examine the DFS concept it is essential first to outline the evolution of the traditional format, this is presented as examined by the industry and by its academic attention.

The traditional luxury flagship store: Industry evolution

Historically the luxury flagship has developed out of two fashion strands whereby the private apartments of the couturier incorporated traditional small luxury shops (Bingham 2005). In the 1920's and 30's

modernism and boutique culture nurtured innovative designs which still influence today (Bingham 2005). Department stores of the 1900's were also influential (Tungate 2005). Paris was particularly influential after the Second World War when luxury fashion brands found it convenient and profitable to have a boutique on the ground floor of the Maison (Bingham 2005). Mores (2006) suggests that it was the opening of the Fiorucci store in Milan in 1967, which was seen as the designer's 'personal inclusive vision of fashion' as spawning the concept store format. Concept shops are 'clever' stores which aspire to be striking but on a smaller scale from flagship stores (Mikunda 2004). The next step in the evolution of the flagship was the advent of the lifestyle store in the 1980's. Mikunda (2004) suggests that lifestyle stores have an under-rated cultural and social function to communicate style awareness and assurance. Fashion has been presented in the media in conjunction with accessories, travel destinations, fine living, hotels, movies and design, and this is the essence of the lifestyle concept (Mikunda 2004). A lifestyle concept can be created by either range theme-ing or architectural theme-ing. Ralph Lauren has been very successful at this cultivating the aristocratic, classic lifestyle of the polo playing golfing classes by designing his stores as if they were inviting consumers into his home (Mikunda 2004, Diamond 2005).

As a direct reaction to the lifestyle store concept, by the end of the eighties, directional luxury fashion stores became minimal and stores resembled art galleries (Mores 2006). This was cemented by John Pawson's New York Calvin Klein flagship in 1996. It was in the 1990s that companies realised retailing was a case of building the image, it wasn't just about products any more, but the aesthetics of the stores (Anon 2006). Luxury brands started building huge large format stores during this time. The resultant growth in the floor space size of designer stores being opened in both cities has been significant. In 1993, in Central London, the average size of a new designer store was 4,700 sq. ft over one selling floor. By 1996, this had increased to 12,300 sq. ft over two selling floors. In Central New York, the average store size increased by 15 percent within the same period, with the store normally trading over three floors (Ferne et al. 1997, 1998). Brown & Patterson (2000) describe the large format flagship stores as 'museumified marketplaces' giving the example of Ralph Lauren's fifth avenue store, and identifying that every mega brand has a museum devoted to their heritage.

Around the same time, circa 1996, Nike cemented the concept of "flagships" with Niketown opening in New York, London and across the globe - and although many thought at the time it was just a marketing proposition, now almost every fashion brand has a flagship in its store portfolio (Wgsn 2007e). Towards the end of the 1990's many luxury brands realised the importance of managing the customer experience at the point of sale (Jackson 2004). This type of investment in retail has led to the notion of brandscaping, defined by Riewold (2002:7) as "the three-dimensional design of a brand's setting, forging backdrops for experiences with a high entertainment value". Brandscapes are important as they help with the image building and positioning. Brandscaping transforms the brand itself into a location/destination (Riewold 2002). By staging the brand experience in flagship stores companies communicate the image of the brand and imprint a characteristic atmosphere on the customer consciousness. One of the main drivers for creating this type of store format was the changing needs and wants of consumers.

Salzman and Matathia (2007) identify that consumers are increasingly interested in buying into a mindset rather than just merchandise. They're drawn to a shop that offers a point of view - where they can go as much for the vibe and the experience as for the goods on sale. Carr (2007) agrees that consumers are increasingly interested in buying into a brand's values rather than just its products, and therefore stores are facing a growing requirement to develop a strong narrative through retail design. Today a flagship store design has become a kind of avant-garde new popular culture, Koolhaas (2000:23) suggests this is because 'shopping is the last remaining form of public activity... that everything is melting into shopping and shopping is melting into everything'. In an age when churches have lost many followers, today places other than church buildings offer to fulfil the deep-rooted consumer need for something sublime, Mikunda (2004) suggest that it is museums and luxury flagship who fill that gap.

Flagships have now moved away from the classic product enticement windows, in favour of a 'sheer awe-inspiring, step-inside-if-you-want-to-see-what-we-got, persuasion on a grand scale' (Anon 2008). For example the Prada Epidentres. Prada's strategy of the 'epicentre' goes against existing trends and sets a

new standard for flagships (Barreneche 2005). The distinguishing point of their flagships was not architecture per se but rather innovation and experimentation, in particular the fusing of commerce and culture. In the New York store there is a designed space where gigs and lectures can be held, again the merchandise is secondary. This is now referred to as the ‘third space’ concept (Nobbs et al 2012). This is clear evidence that competitive retailing of clothing at the high end has created larger and more innovative showcases for display (Bingham 2005). Retailers today are seeking out a variety of different locations, sizes of stores and format design to widen their appeal (Creivy 2008).

In relation to the digital flagship store, as previously identified a key driver of change is the IT which has challenged the importance of the physical location (Riewolt 2002). Considering the success of luxury pure-play providers like Net-a-Porter, My-wardrobe and Yoox the internet has in some ways made location irrelevant if your website design, navigation and content is strong enough. The first luxury fashion brand to create a digital flagship store was Gucci in 2010 and was heavily branded and promoted as such. Since then other brands like Zegna and Diesel have gain press and market attention for adopting a similar approach.

A summary of this time line can be seen in the Figure 1 taken from Nobbs et al (2012).

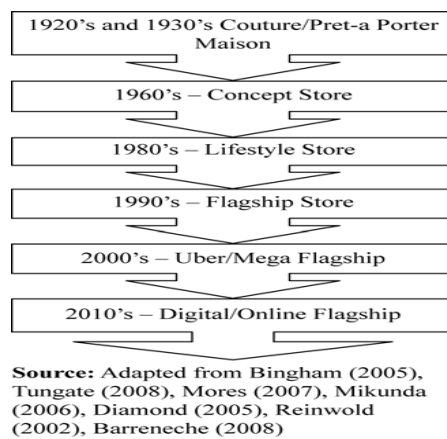


Figure 1 – Evolution of the Flagship Store Format

The traditional luxury flagship store: Academic Evolution

The first academic article which mentions a flagship store in a retail context is by Carusone in 1970 where it is mentioned in the context of the retail trade structure of a small city. Any academic literature before this time refers to flagships in the naval meaning. During the 1970's the retail flagship concept is mentioned in court cases proceedings where buildings are applying for landmark status on the basis that they have a ‘flagship effect’ (Shapiro 1997). Flagships are not featured again until Carusone & Moscovice’s (1985) article which revisits their earlier research and they

state that a flagship store can act as a draw/anchor to get consumer into a retail area. The lack of academic research to this point is consistent with the documentation of the industry evolution which details that the flagship format was not popularised until the 1990's.

By the mid nineties a few articles had cited flagship stores as an internationalizing market entry method, but this was not the focus of the research (Creighton 1992, Davies & Jones 1993, Field 1993, Lea-Greenwood 1994). In the late nineties Fernie et al. (1997,1998), Moore et al. (2000) and Pine & Gilmore (1999) built on previous studies but did not feature flagships as the main research topic. Research in this decade has been more in-depth (Kozinets et al. 2002, Jones & Doucet 2001), but there has been little quantity. It can be stated then that in terms of empirical research there is a complete dearth of studies even when looking at the concept generally. With reference to books, the flagship format also suffers from a lack of academic attention in the marketing discipline. In the last fifteen years flagship stores have become more regularly featured in the retailing texts but this is never in any depth. To date the most academic attention towards the flagship store format is from the architecture discipline due to the number of collaborations between fashion brands and architects..

The digital luxury flagship store

In order to define the digital flagship it is necessary to look at the offline definition to see if it is transferable. It can be stated that a variety of definitions have been offered to describe a flagship store, fig 2 illustrates them below.

Fig 2 Definitions of an Offline Flagship Store

DEFINITION	AUTHOR
"the biggest among the branches and is a showcase for a retailer's image and products by carrying the complete range with better interior décor and staff"	Chong (1996: 6)
"they carry a single brand, the brand manufacturer owns them, they are operated with the intention of building the brand rather than operating to sell product"	Kozinets et al. (2002:17)
"the principal store of a retail chain".	Mikunda (2004:228)
"allows the brand to re-enforce its image communication through establishing a physical presence in a prestige shopping location and to influence the experience at the point of sale"	Jackson (2004:177)
"the most important in a chain"	Diamond (2005:12)
"the pinnacle in retail chain, usually large and located in a high footfall prestigious location, with a full range of merchandise but an emphasis on the more expensive high quality and high fashion lines".	Varley (2005:176)
"a translation of the marketing strategy into a 360 degree experience of consumption, and is increasingly becoming the company's prime mass medium"	Mores (2006:25).
"the largest and most representative store in a chain organisation".	Fringis (2008:458)
"A larger than average specialty retail format in a prominent geographical location, offering the widest and deepest product range within the highest level of store environment and serving to showcase the brand's position, image and values"	Nobbs et al (2012; 23)

Source: Chong (1996), Kozinets et al. (2002) Mikunda (2004), Jackson (2004), Diamond (2005) Varley (2005), Mores (2006), Fringis (2008).

In terms of their application within a digital format only Mikunda, Diamond and Fringis's are suitable, however they do not effectively describe what is different or special about them. The most recent definition offered by Nobbs et al (2012) is useful in that it identifies it as a speciality retail format with an important branding function, unfortunately it focuses on too many tangible characteristics like the size, location and store environment. This evaluation of definitions is useful as it supports the rationale for research due to the lack of applicable definitions.

Digital Flagship Store: Form

Again in order to identify the differential form of a DFS, the traditional characteristics must be examined. In a recent paper by Nobbs et al (2012) five main dimensions were empirically investigated these were:

1. Size and Location
2. Distribution Hierarchy
3. Design Language
4. Strategic Purpose
5. Unique Management Structure

The purpose of the first phase of the research is to determine to what extent these characteristics are transferable.

Digital Flagship Store: Function

The only piece of academic work to consider this concept is by Jackson (2009) who suggests that DFS are needed by luxury fashion brands to showcase products and practices in an innovatively designed environment. Another function of DFS is that they can offer brands the possibility to have direct control over multiple product categories in one location. Increasingly DFS also offer a space for brands to be able produce and promote their own editorial content which for luxury brands in particular is very attractive due to the heightened control and measurement mechanisms. Anecdotaly it can be suggested that a DFS could be more cost effective than a bricks and mortar flagship store but there is no evidence at the moment to support this.

Methodology

The exploratory nature of the research means the adoption of a qualitative, inductive methodology is suitable. Due to an absence of accepted theoretical frameworks a deductive approach was rejected, however an element of quantitative research will be utilised in order to increase the validity of the study. To meet the aim of the research a two stage approach has been designed, the first is observation in the form of content analysis of the website of a sample of 8-12 luxury fashion brands. An observation grid criteria will be created from secondary research and will have been presented in the literature review. The objective of this phase is to identify a set of characteristics of digital flagship stores, i.e. it is necessary to distinguish how is a digital flagship store different from the main e-commerce website. The second phase will involve in-depth elite interviews with 6-8 luxury brand managers in order to test the characteristics identified in phase one and furthermore it aims to concentrate on highlighting the strategic and operational reasons for operating and branding a digital flagship store. Both phases of research will be analysed using thematic content analysis.

Results and Discussion

This paper is a work in process and the primary research is planned to be undertaken in February 2013 and therefore the results and discussion will be presented at the conference in April.

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Is UNIQLO an Iconic Business Model in the Japanese Fast Fashion Market? : A Re-evaluation of UNIQLO as a Fast Fashion Retailer

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Abstract

UNIQLO, which founded its first retail shop in 1984, has made great success in the Japan, and as a result has been identified as an icon of the casual fashion business in Japan. UNIQLO has 832 domestic shops and 292 overseas shops in China, Korea, Taiwan, UK, U.S, and France. The 2012 fiscal results is expected to be approximately \$10 billion in revenue and \$1.5 billion in profit, making it the world's fourth largest clothing retailer after Zara, H&M, and Gap.



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There are two themes that Katsue Edo is in research. One is Fashion and Sustainability, which he concentrates on education and social systems. The other is Picture Mining, a new methodology for Marketing Research. Instead of using literal data, this research and analysis uses pictures. These could be used in fashion research.

In Japan, phenomenon, such as the 'Anti UNIQLO Shopping-bag movement (this occurred when many people bought UNIQLO products but the customers were ashamed to use them) occurred around 2000', and also the 'Uni-Deco movement' (decorate UNIQLO clothes because of their simplicity)' occurred around 2008-2009. It was from such movements, that it is possible to identify UNIQLO as an iconic business model in the Japanese casual fashion market.

Recently, it is said that UNIQLO has established its position in the fast fashion market after the so called 'Fast Fashion War' (Kawashima, 2009). There was intense competition in the Japanese casual fashion market, due to the entry of the worldwide fast fashion retailers, such as H&M (2008) and, Forever 21 (2009). This 'Fast Fashion War' continues, but many researchers evaluate the UNIQLO as a successful business model among fast fashion retailers.

This paper will discuss; about (1) why UNIQLO has become an icon in the Japanese casual fashion market, and (2) is it really an Iconic business model of the 'fast fashion market'? The first discussion will be made from a marketing point of view, where UNIQLO made a successful marketing mix strategy. The second discussion will be a re-evaluation of the UNIQLO as an iconic business model in the fast fashion market, referring to definitions and concepts of fast fashion.

1. Introduction

UNIQLO is the leading casual fashion retailer in Japan and the fourth largest fashion brand in the world after Zara, H&M and Gap. Over 95% of Japanese, from young to old, from men to women, know this casual fashion retailer well (Cross Marketing 2010). According to research conducted by RJC (2009), UNIQLO brand recognition was 99.5%, experience in buying the brand was 92.5%, and buying experience in the last 12 months was 74.6%.

As the figures show, it is evident that UNIQLO is an iconic business model in the Japanese casual fashion market. There are many domestic reports that analyze the success of UNIQLO's business model, and it is often compared with fast fashion retailers, such as Zara, H&M, and Topshop (Kawashima 2009; Cross Marketing 2010; RJC 2009). This is one of the reasons why UNIQLO is evaluated as an iconic business model in the fast fashion business by Japanese consumers. However, is UNIQLO really an iconic business model in fast fashion? Although UNIQLO has achieved global status, not many academic reports evaluating UNIQLO in Japan have been made available abroad.

This paper will first introduce UNIQLO's business model in the casual fashion market. After this, it will discuss (1) why UNIQLO has become an icon in the Japanese casual fashion market, and (2) is it really

Keywords: Fast Fashion, Slow Fashion, Innovation of Fashion Lifestyles, Marketing Mix Strategy

an Iconic business model in the 'fast fashion market'? The first discussion will be made from a marketing point of view, where UNIQLLO made a successful marketing mix strategy through innovation. The second discussion will be a re-evaluation of UNIQLLO as an iconic business model in the fast fashion market, referring to definitions and concepts of fast fashion.

2. The Success of UNIQLLO

2.1 Profiles of UNIQLLO

UNIQLLO, which opened its first retail shop in 1984, has experienced great success in the Japanese fashion market. UNIQLLO, which is the major brand of the holding company Fast Retailing, is one of the most famous companies in Japan, known to all generations. The brand name 'UNIQLLO' is identified as an icon of the casual fashion business in Japan. UNIQLLO has 832 domestic shops and 292 overseas shops in the U.K., China, Hong Kong, South Korea, the United States, France, Singapore, Russia, Taiwan, Malaysia and the Philippines. Over 90 % of the stores overseas are in Asian countries; 145 in China, 84 in South Korea, 17 in Taiwan, 16 in Honk Kong and 17 in other Southeast Asian countries. In Western countries, there are 10 stores in the U.K., 3 in the United States, 2 in France, and 2 in Russia (Figures are of Nov.2012). UNIQLLO has flagship stores in Japan, and alsoglobal flagships stores in Taipei and Seoul, and on New York's Fifth Avenue, as a part of its plans to grow business worldwide. Sales and number of stores are shown in Figure 1.

The 2012 fiscal results of Fast Retailing (Sept.2011-Aug.2012) was JPY928 billion (+13.2%) in net sales and JPY126 billion (+13.6%) in operating profit, making it the world's fourth largest clothing retailer after Zara, H&M, and Gap. In the 2013 fiscal year it is expected to have JPY1056 billion (+13.7%) in net sales. Fast Retailing aims to open between 200 and 300 stores worldwide each year, focusing on rapid growth in Asia. By 2014 the company intends to open a large number of stores in Southeast Asian countries. Overall, Fast Retailing intends to increase revenue by JPY500 billion annually. UNIQLLO dominates Japan's retail casual market and Fast Retailing is mounting a global push of the in-house brand of affordable basics in order to surpass Zara's owner, Inditex S.A., Hennes & Mauritz AB (H&M) and Gap Inc. to become the world's top apparel retailer by 2020.

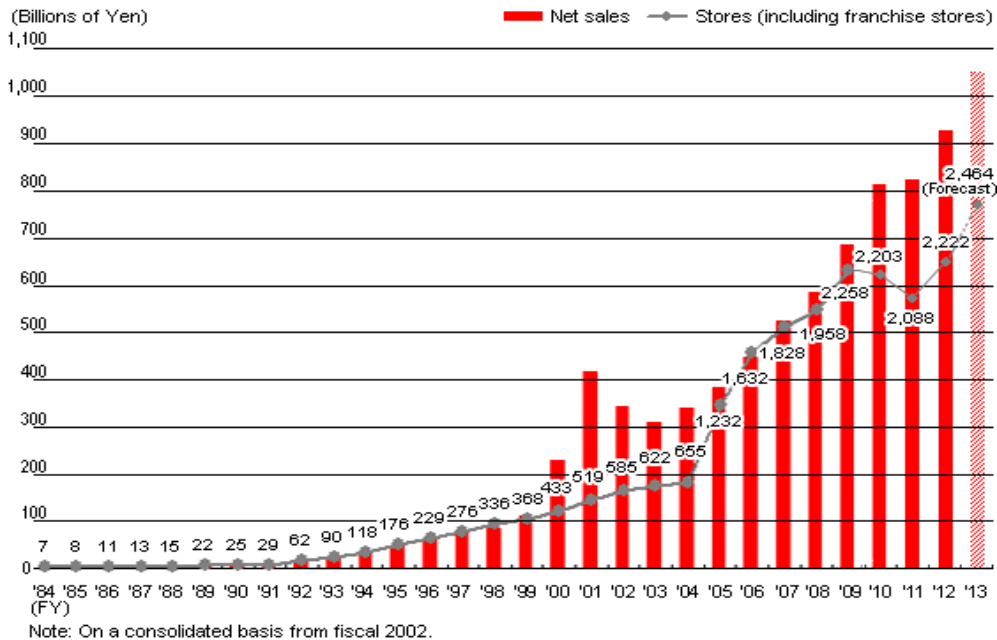


Figure 1. Sales and Number of Stores of UNIQLLO

2.2 The First Expansion Period (1998-2001)

Originally, UNIQLO started from a little store called Ogori Shoji in 1949. In 1984, the first UNIQLO (abbreviation for Unique Clothing Warehouse) store was opened in Fukuro-machi, Hiroshima, Japan, by Tadashi Yanai (C.E.O). The concept of selling casual clothes at reasonable prices to young consumers was accepted by the market, and by 1994, the number of stores operating across Japan increased to over 100. In 1994, the company changed its name to Fast Retailing Co., Ltd.

The first expansion period started in 1998 when UNIQLO launched a fleece campaign. The price of the fleece was JPY1900 which generated high public interest because it was an incredible price compared to those of its competitors. Also, UNIQLO opened its first urban store in Harajuku, a center for young fashion, which was recognized throughout Japan despite the recession, or perhaps because of it. In the early 2000s, when the fleece was very popular, UNIQLO sold 26 million fleeces in one year. It is clear that it was very popular because Japan's population is only 120 million people. Net sales doubled to JPY228 billion in the 2000 fiscal year, and again doubled to JPY418 billion in 2001.

The brand reached its peak around 2000 to 2001 when its ubiquity started to become an object of derision. The merchandise was unisex, suburban, made for everyone and everywhere. There were so many people carrying UNIQLO shopping bags in the city that consumers became ashamed and even hid them from sight. People became bored with UNIQLO's basic items and started calling them 'Unibore.' Fashionable Japanese became snifty about UNIQLO's cheap clothes, creating a slang word 'Unibare!', which has a negative connotation meaning 'you're wearing UNIQLO clothes, aren't you?'. Net Sales decreased to JPY341 billion (-18.2%) in the 2002 fiscal year and JPY301 billion in 2003.

During this time, UNIQLO opened its first overseas store in London (2001), its very first step towards global expansion. However, it was not successful. International expansion programs in the UK saw a tumultuous decline in profits, forcing Fast Retailing to shut down 16 of the 21 UNIQLO stores it had opened because of competition.

2.3 The second expansion period (2006-)

After the depression of Fiscal Year 2002, net sales recovered due to some items that interested the market, such as cashmere sweaters in 2004. However, for several years the concepts of UNIQLO were unstable which resulted in a lack of communication to the market. Consumers could not understand the real value of UNIQLO's products. It should be mentioned here that the initial release of the mega-hit product 'HEATTECH' was in 2003. It took 4 years for the consumers to understand the function and quality of HEATTECH before the boom finally arrived in 2007 when UNIQLO made an appropriate campaign.

It was in the fall/winter season of 2006 that UNIQLO made a genuine recovery with the popularity of skinny jeans. Since skinny jeans were just beginning to become fashionable worldwide, UNIQLO sold 4 million pairs the next year. In 2007, the HEATTECH campaign contributed to a massive surge in sales. HEATTECH was developed with TORAY, a major fiber company in the world, and sold 20 million units in 2007. HEATTECH is highly-functional innerwear which makes layered fashion more stylish, and means that fashion does not necessarily have to be associated with bulky clothes in colder seasons.

There was an average 15% net sales increase during this period. The sales of fiscal year 2004 was JPY339 billion, which grew to JPY685 billion in 2009. UNIQLO began to implement two different strategies when its popular products increased its sales and profit. One was large-format stores and the other was globalization.

Most UNIQLO stores were small shops in malls or roadside outlets. In 2004, the first large-format UNIQLO store opened in Shinsaibashi, Osaka with over 1,600 square meters of floor space. Similarly, UNIQLO opened a store in Ginza, Tokyo in 2005, and a 3300 square meter floor space store in Kobe.

At the same time, UNIQLO once again attempted to expand its business abroad. In 2004, UNIQLO entered a joint venture with South Korea's Lotte Shopping Co., Ltd. to expand the UNIQLO business in the South Korean market, opening its first store in Seoul in 2005. In 2005, UNIQLO announced an international expansion strategy reversal: the suburban stores in Japan would stay, but growth abroad would be focused in splashy

stores in the major cities of each continent. Since 2006, starting from the New York Soho store, global flagship stores were opened almost every year (London 2007; Paris 2009; Shanghai 2010; Osaka 2010; Taiwan 2011; New York Fifth Avenue 2011; Korea 2011; Tokyo 2012).

This time globalization produced definite results in international sales. Net sales in 2011 was JPY93 billion which has grown to JPY153 billion in 2012, and it is estimated to be JPY216 billion in 2013.

3. The Iconic business model in the Fast Fashion Market in Japan: From a Marketing Point of View

3.1 Marketing Strategy

3.1.1 The Concept of UNIQLO

The corporate statement of Fast Retailing is 'Changing clothes. Changing conventional wisdom. Change the world.' UNIQLO has change the world by their innovation in fashion lifestyles. The company's name comes from 'Unique Clothing', and it is possible to understand that the success of UNIQLO comes from the spirit and philosophy of this corporate statement. Many of its products are unique, innovative and can change fashion lifestyles.

There is also one more important concept. The concept that UNIQLO is 'Made for All'. It is obvious that this is the basis of UNIQLO's marketing mix strategy. The next section will discuss this point.

3.1.2 Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning (STP)

Segmentation, targeting, and positioning is a core activity in planning a marketing mix strategy. In general, it is said that this STP process will (1) be an efficient use of limited resources, (2) match the needs better and make effective results for the marketing mix strategy, and (3) make a competitive advantage in the market.

However, UNIQLO does not have specific segments and targets because of their concept. It does not need segments and targets because UNIQLO's products are 'Made for All'.

Even though UNIQLO does not have a target segment, it is 'uniquely positioned'. By matching the marketing needs, UNIQLO positioned itself as 'Basics' between Fashion goods and necessities, which can be considered a 'Blue Ocean (Kim and Mauborgne 2005)'. The Economist (2010) says, 'BASICS—everyday items such as T-shirts, socks and jeans, in the jargon of the garment industry—are not normally considered the most exciting part of the business. But they are found in almost every wardrobe. UNIQLO, a successful Japanese firm with big ambitions, has transformed them into a goldmine.'

3.2 Marketing Mix Strategy

3.2.1 Product Strategy

At UNIQLO, the basic merchandising concept is to offer clothes that can be worn by anyone, anywhere, anytime. UNIQLO's goal is to offer fashionable, high-quality basic casual wear at reasonable prices so that everyone can enjoy the quality, color and style of UNIQLO clothing (Fast Retailing Annual Report 2006). This concept made an innovation to the current fashion market. Segmentation and targeting naturally narrowed the market volume, resulting in small scale production and higher prices. Since fashion products had to be 'in fashion', short lead times and short product life cycles were necessary, and this encouraged fashion companies to produce on an economical scale. UNIQLO made its product life cycles longer, with fewer basic items. As a result, UNIQLO could take their time in R&D, such as developing its HEATTECH products with the company TORAY.

However, it is important to note that UNIQLO's product lines are not just mass products. The difference with simple mass products is (1) Basic items that are fashionable (they are of course functional and high

quality), (2) Component items for a fashionable life. UNIQLO's main concept is not to produce fashionable items which have trends.

3.2.2 Price Strategy

UNIQLO is known for its low price and quality. This was made possible from (1) Supply chain management (outlined below) and (2) Economical scale merit by mass production (3) Production in China which lowered production costs. In the first success period, the fleece was considerably cheaper compared to UNIQLO's competitors. Many consumers now have an image of UNIQLO as affordable and high quality.

3.2.3 Place and Distribution Strategy

UNIQLO as a SPA (Specialty Retailer of Private label Apparel), had to plan (1) store location/ format development strategy, and (2) Efficient supply chain management for product development. First, to sell high volumes UNIQLO needed to make efficient and large distribution channels. In the early 1990s, UNIQLO attained growth through roadside stores. After the boom of the fleece in 1998 it modified its strategy. In the Annual Report 2006, it states that:

'Especially from 1998 onwards, UNIQLO posted substantial gains, partly because of the boom in fleece products. However, the reaction to this boom thereafter led to declines in net sales and income for the years ended August 31, 2002 and 2003, but sales and income staged a comeback beginning in the year ended August 2004. Since then, sales have increased along with UNIQLO's aggressive "scrap-and-build" strategy aimed at extending its store network.'

In addition to this 'scrap-and-build' strategy, UNIQLO has made new formats, such as large format stores, *ekinaka* (inside the station) and *echika* (inside the subway station) stores in urban areas, and global flagship stores.

Secondly, UNIQLO needed to build stable supply chain management. Many studies of the UNIQLO chain management state that the key factor to its success was due to this chain management (Yamaguchi and Yoshida, 2002). These studies mainly refer to the first success period, when the Japanese market was struggling from a severe recession. It discusses the production in China and direct purchasing. CEO, Mr Yanai, bypassed middlemen by purchasing directly from suppliers. He challenged the view that Japanese consumers would reject Chinese-made clothes (at that time images of Chinese products were low in quality).

3.2.4 Promotion and Communication Strategy

The concept of 'basic items made for all' led to a marketing innovation in the casual fashion market in Japan. Longer product life cycles with bigger markets made mass production, lower prices, maintenance of large store networks possible which no other casual fashion retailer could do. Another innovation that UNIQLO created is a promotion and communication strategy. Due to the short product life cycles there was no merit in mass communication or promotions in current fashion products. It is obvious that by the time a new product penetrates in the market, using mass communication like TV commercials and advertising, the life cycle of the fashion product would have already ended.

UNIQLO changed its promotion and communication strategy drastically. UNIQLO used TV commercials for fleeces in 1998, advertised the opening of its Harajuku store inside trains and stations. This made UNIQLO more recognizable to all generations, which led to a high recognition in the Japanese market even today. UNIQLO ranks among Japan's ten most valuable brands, according to Interbrand, a consultancy company. Its low prices are even blamed for fuelling Japan's deflation.

4. UNIQLO as an Iconic Business Model of the Fast Fashion Market

This paper has outlined UNIQLO's business model and discussed reasons for its success from a marketing point of view. Many people might think that this business model is not fast fashion at all. However, in Japan, many researchers as well as consumers think that UNIQLO is an iconic fast fashion business model. In this section, this paper will analyze why this occurred and seek to re-evaluate UNIQLO's business model.

4.1 The Japanese Fashion Market and the Entry of Foreign Fast Fashion Retailers

Recently, it is said that UNIQLO has established its position in the fast fashion market after the so called 'Fast Fashion War' (Kawashima, 2009). There was intense competition in the Japanese casual fashion market due to the entry of worldwide fast fashion retailers, such as H&M (2008), and Forever 21 (2009). ZARA (1998), Topshop (2006) and GAP (1995) had already entered the Japanese market. This 'Fast Fashion War' continues, but many researchers evaluate UNIQLO as a successful business model among fast fashion retailers. Why is this? To explain this question, this paper will analyze the Japanese fashion market at that time.

After the Lehman Crisis in 2007, there was a severe recession in the Japanese economy. Naturally, the fashion market declined due to consumer behaviour. Consumers did not want to buy expensive clothes, but rather they wanted to purchase good value-for-money clothes. At the same time, foreign fast fashion retailers entered the Japanese fashion market with fashionable items at low prices, and most of them succeeded initially.

As previously explained, 2007 was a turning point for UNIQLO with the HEATTECH campaign. UNIQLO also had significant sales in BRATOPS, and enjoyed an increase in net sales and profit. They were also low in price and were good value, similar to the foreign fast fashion retailers. UNIQLO attracted the media's attention by opening large format stores and by launching projects to be a global player in the casual apparel market. This media exposure was similar to fast fashion. Meanwhile, the current fashion retailers were suffering from the recession. Media, journalists, and researchers started to compare the success of UNIQLO with the other foreign fast fashion retailers as case studies. This coincidence misled the market and even the researcher's recognition that UNIQLO was a successful and iconic fast fashion retailer. The company's name, 'Fast Retailing', probably made many people confused. The next section will re-evaluate UNIQLO's business model by considering definitions of fast fashion.

4.2 UNIQLO as the Iconic business of Slow Fashion

In-depth academic studies have been made concerning 'fast fashion' in 2006 (Barnes and Greenwood 2006; Doyle, Moore and Morgan 2006; Hayes and Jones 2006; Sheridan Moore and Nobbs 2006; Bruce and Daly 2006). This was just before the Lehmann Crisis and the entry of fast fashion retailers to the Japanese market. The impact of fast fashion retailers was so large that few people had time to review the abundant knowledge. It is time, especially in Japan, that the definition and concept of fast fashion be made clear, thus re-evaluating UNIQLO's business model.

Examining the definitions, we can say that fast fashion consists of two major characteristics. One is the matter of time and speed, the other is cost and low prices. Bruce and Daly (2006) discuss the timing of moving clothes into stores within the shortest time, fashion buying cycles, and cost factors. So, the fast fashion business model has to be (1) short cycles to be always in fashion, and (2) affordable prices with mass production and consumption. Regarding these terms, it is possible to re-evaluate UNIQLO as a 'slow fashion retailer' as shown in Table 1. It is possible to say that UNIQLO's business model is quite different from those of ZARA and H&M. Whereas the Spanish firm chases every fleeting fashion trend, and distributes these trends to the masses as quickly as possible, UNIQLO relies on large volumes of high-quality, cheap items, such as fleeces and jeans, that last all season. This means UNIQLO's business model does not incorporate a short fashion cycle. Furthermore, UNIQLO keeps its items on its shelves longer, and has fewer items compared to its rivals which allow its merchandise to be lower in price.

5. Conclusion

By reviewing UNIQLO's history of success, this paper has defined two successful periods when marketing strategies differed. The first period was based on the fleece and its promotion strategy, while the second period was due to the HEATTECH product and global strategies. Despite the high evaluation of UNIQLO as a fast fashion retailer in Japan, this paper has demonstrated that UNIQLO appears not to be a fast fashion retailer. The paper also discussed the Japanese fashion market and fast fashion retailers, and discovered why

UNIQLO was considered a fast fashion retailer. Even though UNIQLO may be not a fast fashion retailer, it should be re-evaluated. This paper evaluates UNIQLO as an iconic business model of 'Slow Fashion'. Further research should be conducted in this area because the image of UNIQLO is likely to differ between countries.

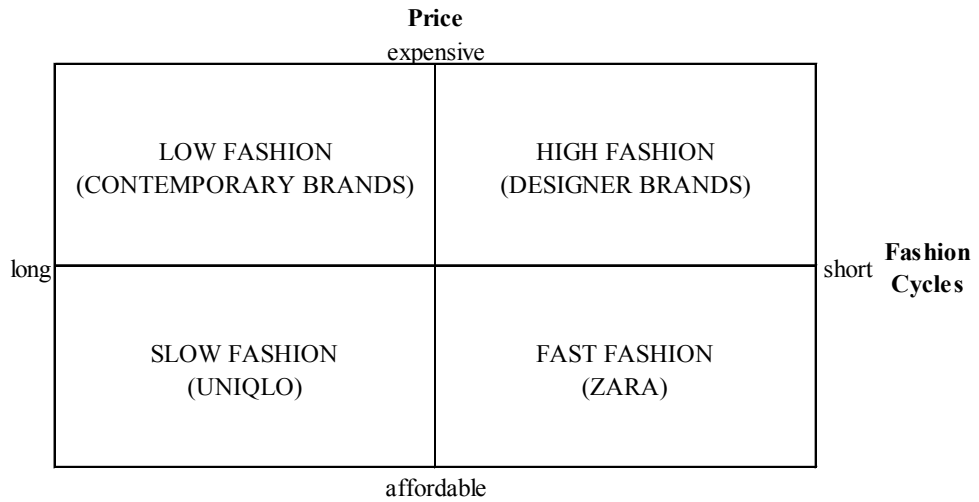


Table 1. Types of Fashion Business Models

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Fabindia - The company with a mission

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Abstract

Fabindia is a chain store retailing garments, furnishings, fabrics and ethnic products handmade by craftspeople across rural India. Established in 1960 by John Bissell, an American working for the Ford Foundation, it started out by exporting home furnishings, before stepping into domestic retail in 1976, when it opened its first retail store. Today it has over 144 stores across India and abroad, and is managed by his son, William Bissell.

Fabindia was founded on the strong belief that there was a need for a vehicle for marketing the vast and diverse craft traditions of India. It is India's largest private platform for products that are made from traditional techniques, skills and hand-based processes and it links over 80,000 craft based rural producers to modern urban markets.

Fabindia has been iconic in promoting inclusive capitalism. In this paper I want to evaluate this effective cooperative movement. The premise behind it is that India cannot succeed if it leaves its people behind. Fabindia has set up 17 supplier regions companies (SRC's) for the purpose of aggregating its artisans-suppliers and making them stakeholders. They provide a bright innovation of aggregating rural producers, giving them ownership and also providing managerial inputs to sustain these businesses. There are artisan directors on the board who have started to understand the role they can play in the decision making process. This model of business will ensure the survival of the craft and provide the artisans with an incentive to continue their craft. A Gandhian experiment with community owned companies is not just a flourishing retail enterprise in India but a model for all kinds of companies in the developing world.

“It seems contradictory that we pursue both profit and a social goal, but I believe that is the only way to do it”.- William Bissell, MD Fabindia.

In his book – Making India work, William Bissell wrote-“ India is not a poor country. It is a poorly managed country”. A Gandhian at heart he discusses how the core guiding principles of Gandhian philosophy could be adopted to build a new, sustainable, accessible and realistic framework for the governance of India.

His effort to expand Fabindia is based on his Gandhian philosophy.

History of Fabindia

Founded in 1960 by a young American, John Bissell, to market the diverse craft traditions of India, Fabindia began as a company exporting home furnishings. Fifteen years later, it's first retail store opened in Greater Kailash, New Delhi, with a range of upholstery fabrics, durries and

home linens. Retail was a small part of the company's business until the mid-to-late 1990's, when William Bissell took over from his father John Bissell and transformed it into a national retail brand. (Chatterjee P, Chakravarty C, the economic times, 2012).

Today, Fabindia, known for its kurtas handcrafted jewellery, besides household furnishings, pottery, organic food and handicrafts, operates close to 150 outlets across major cities and small towns. It sells 66,000 products sourced from India's 212 districts. (Chatterjee P, Chakravarty C, the economic times, 2012). (picture 10 shows an example of a typical Fabindia store).

Mission and Philosophy

Fabindia was founded on the principle that there was a need for a vehicle for marketing the vast and

Keywords: Inclusive capitalism, Artisan directors, Rural craftsmen, Urban markets

diverse craft traditions of India and thereby fill the need to provide and sustain employment. They blend indigenous craft techniques with contemporary designs in order to create aesthetic and affordable products for their consumers. (pictures 23-28 show the products displayed in typically aesthetic fashion).

Their aim is to provide customers with hand crafted products which help support and encourage good craftsmanship.

The products are sourced from all over India. Fabindia works closely with artisans by providing various inputs including design, quality control, access to raw materials and production coordination. The vision continues to be to maximize the handmade element in the products, whether it is handwoven textiles, hand block printing, hand embroidery or handcrafting home products (www.fabindia.com). In fact the company has a policy to sell only those goods that have at least one handmade element in them. (pictures 29-35 show some of the above mentioned products).

Fabindia's growth

Fabindia had undergone a slew of changes in its corporate structure in the 90's led by the closure of its association with Habitat (it's biggest export buyer at one point) in 1992-93. This signalled the beginning of a transformation in the client base. In 1990's exports constituted 76 per cent of the total sales at Fabindia, but by 1994 this had declined to 65 per cent of the total sales. By the end of financial year 1995-96, domestic sales had overtaken exports. By the new millennium Fabindia had opened 6 stores and crossed a turnover of 30 crore. (Singh, R, 2010).

As the stores grew so did the product line. For twenty years Fabindia had only one store in India (in Greater Kailash I, an upscale neighbourhood in south Delhi). The product line had originally been developed for the export market, but in 1996 with the home market constituting 52.4 percent of the total sales, it morphed and regenerated itself dramatically. But the company opted to stay with hand- processed products. In the beginning, merchandise sent to the stores in Bangalore, Madras and Bombay was entirely a reflection of what sold in Delhi. However, the choice of size, style and colour varied between the cities. A decision was therefore made to decentralize production. This allowed the stores in different locations to decide the kurta lengths, colours and fabrics to suit their clientele. As long as the 'Fab look' was maintained and the top line increased, the stores were allowed to customise products for their shop shelves. Dupattas were converted to kurtas, left- over fabric to lamp shades and even towels to towel slippers by the store staff .

Geographical diversity and climatic variations also determined product styles. The best-sellers became significant for understanding the new markets. For instance, nabha light and madhulika were two lightweight fabrics that did well in Mumbai. Unlike Delhi, Mumbai hosts the bollywood culture and men like their shirts in slim fitting styles and in bright colours like orange and purple. To cater to this, Mumbai and Bangalore stores ordered bright fabrics and fabricated men's shirts. (Singh, R, 2010).

In 2000-01, William encountered a Dutchman called Hey Soiree, who was a specialist in organics and shared this interest. A year later, the company decided to invest in organics. They started with coffee and honey which then blossomed into a vast range of organic offerings by 2004. (Singh,R, 2010).

Jaswant Purohit, who heads the organics was quoted in Harvard Business case study, 2007, as saying ;
 "Our customers are drawn predominantly to our ready-to-eat items, such as dry fruit, cereals, and pickles. The good news is that once they try the product, they tend to become repeat buyers. The bad news is that since the supply chain can be shaky, they tend to get upset when the product is out of stock."

Till the year 2003-04 the garment product flow continued largely as it had for years with expanded and specialized teams. The Product Design Group (PDG) worked with the vendors with color palettes and designs to help develop different products. Vendors would then prepare samples of those products and return them to the PDG for approval. Once satisfied the PDG presented the new designs to the selection committee which comprised William Bissell and Charu Sharma (the head of the garment business). This stringent procedure was necessary to maintain the 'Fabindia look'. Approved and selected products were then passed on to the vendors to fabricate. The production department had merchandise who served as a contact point for the

store managers who ordered stock on a weekly basis. (Singh, R, 2010). Exhibit 3 shows the organization chart of the company and exhibit 4 shows the profile of the senior management.

By 2006, Fabindia products had extended to sixteen categories. These were womenswear, Indian and Western menswear, childrenswear, accessories, bed and kitchen linen, table linen, upholstery and curtains, fabrics and floor coverings, furniture, hardwood and lighting, organic food and body care. A range of personal care products was also launched the same year.(picture 11,16,17,18,19,21 and 22 show the product range and the store ambiance).

Garments however dominate the product mix accounting for 70 percent of the company's turnover.(pictures 16, 17 show examples of the garment ranges offered).

Fabindia had three types of stores: premium, regular and concept stores. In addition, it sold its merchandise to consumers in other countries via an online store launched in 2004. The premium stores carried a wide range of products, a large part of their inventory comprised high end goods. Regular stores on the other hand carried a smaller quantity of high end goods. Concept stores were small with fewer stock keeping units (SKU's). Except for two stores overseas, all the others were owned or leased by Fabindia. Store managers were treated like entrepreneurs. They were allotted budgets to order goods and meet expenses. The managers interacted with the head office regularly to seek inputs about the new merchandise needed to replenish their stores (Khaire M,Kothandaraman P, 2007). Store formats were reconceptualized several times during the planning process. There was an endeavor to find a size to format ratio that would optimize the sale of Fabindia's complete range of products.(Singh , R 2010).

Shilpa Sharma, a senior manager, who was involved in the setting up of the new Fabindia stores states : "The joy of every Fabindia store is that it lends itself to the character of the location it is set up in. There are nuances in all these properties that give the city away- the handmade tiles in goa, the historical calligraphy embedded in the walls of Kolkata's Hindustan Park, the carvings on the Corinthian columns in Jeroo, Mumbai. You walk into a property and you know what a Fabindia could do there. It is so 'Fabindia' to do that."(Singh, R , 2010) (pictures 12, 13 and 14 show some of the stores mentioned above).

Recognition was bound to come.

Fabindia was awarded 'Best Retail Brand' in 2004 by The Economic Times of India.

In 2004, Fabindia was featured as part of a CNBC special TV report on India.

In 2008, Fabindia was named one of India's Top Marketers by Business Today, India's leading business magazine.

In 2009 the company was featured as an example of Game-changers by BusinessWeek, the international business magazine.

In 2010 the company was recognized as one of the most innovative models by a Monitor- Business Today survey conducted across industry. (www.fabindia.com).

Restructuring - William's way

In the year 2003, Fabindia focused on the growth of domestic retail and launched vision plan I. It ambitiously aimed to increase its monthly sales from Rs 2 crore to Rs 8 crore within a period of just four years. This target was achieved by the middle of 2005, two years earlier than anticipated. Vision Plan II was initiated in 2005 with the objective of propelling the company from the monthly turnover of Rs 8 crore to Rs 20 crore. Exhibit 6 shows the increase in sales from 1977 to 2009. Vision plan III was even bolder and more radical. It aimed at creating 100,000 sustainable jobs in rural india, strengthening the brand in India and the international market and improving profitability and capital equity. In 2007, it strove towards mobilizing approximately Rs 245 crore for the upgradation and expansion of the company. (Singh, R, 2010).

William Bissell wrote to the board:"This plan will attempt to create a brand made up of distinct business whose common features are that these products are handmade, environmentally sound, largely produced in rural areas and at fair wages and remuneration. In its entirety, Fabindia will represent an 'alternative'

model based on the principles of partnership, profit sharing, economic development of rural areas, resource conservation and shareholder value”.

Broken into its constituents, the plan aims at growing the company through expansion and consolidation. On the one hand it aimed at opening new stores and enhancing the product line, on the other it suggested converting the company into a number of business hubs spun out from the core which offered logistics, planning and financial support. (Singh , R 2010).

In 2004, Bissell set up an organization to represent weavers, producers, wholesalers and shops selling fabric. It was a lobby, aimed at influencing government policy that was threatening to levy tax and VAT on handloom cotton yardage. This would impact all those working in the industry by raising prices and affecting trade in handloom fabric. The legislation would hit Fabindia seriously since 90 per cent of its basic fabric was handloom.

The All India and Craft Welfare Association (AIACA) was instituted in 2005 with senior members from the textile and fashion world. With Laila Tyabji from the craft organization, Dastakar, Pritam Singh from Anokhi, Ritu Kumar; Madhukar Khera and Fabindia. They became an advocacy body for a consortium of crafts groups and instituted the Craftmark, a trademark certifying authentic handmade products. Craftmark now funds research and consumer awareness programmes and publishes a catalogue showcasing new craft products from the member groups. (Singh, R, 2010).

The setting up of Supplier Region Companies or SRCs

In 2007, Bissell began setting up the SRCs (supplier region companies). Supplier regions correspond to geographical areas that had concentrations of production units supplying products to Fabindia. There were almost 40,000 artisans and craft persons working in these regions. These included weavers, dyers, printers, embroiderers, embellishers, leather workers, fabricators of clothing or furniture, farmers and manufacturers of organic products. Fabindia identified seventeen such supplier region areas and drew each into a corporate entity with the artisans in that region invited to become shareholders. Thus, seventeen community-owned companies or Supplier Region Companies (SRCs) were formed. The SRCs were set up not just for a better grip on the supply chain and contemporariness of products but also for artisans to have more say in the goods they produce. Each SRC has about 20-30 clusters and every cluster comprises thousands of artisans. So each artisan became a shareholder in his respective SRC. And being public limited entities, these SRCs could borrow money from banks more easily against orders from a privately- held Fabindia. Exhibit 5 shows the map of India with the location of the SRCs and the products they offer.

The role of the the SRCs was very clearly defined - to develop products with the specialists, develop processes for quality control, make payments to artisans for their products, maintain a warehouse to hold stocks in anticipation of orders from Fabindia, purchase raw material in bulk at competitive prices and finance projects that would lead to design enhancement. They also had to look for new artisans and develop new crafts in the region to strengthen the supply chain. Funding for the SRCs was to come from equity investment, from artisan shareholders and from bank loans partially guaranteed by Fabindia. To provide affordable working capital for SRCs, a joint investment fund was created which was a partnership between Fabindia and a national bank. The idea was to offer loans to these companies with Fabindia as a guarantor. The model was safe as Fabindia was committed to buying everything produced by the SRCs. (Singh , R 2010).

Around the same time, Bissell created the Artisans Micro Finance Private Limited (AMFPL) fund, a fully-owned subsidiary of Fabindia, which invested in the SRCs. According to a typical shareholding pattern in a community-owned company, AMFPL would own 40% stake, the artisans make up 30% and other investors would pick up the remaining 30%. “This is like buying shares of something that is giving you livelihood and it is a very different relationship (from owning equity in the share market) because you are connected to the company through your associations,” says Bissell.

In other words, as of now, 30,000 of the 86,000 artisans indirectly own a part of Fabindia through AMFPL's holding across the 17 SRCs. The plan really is to enlarge the shareholding base of Fabindia by integrating

the other artisans either directly or indirectly into the Fabindia family. “The ultimate shareholding will happen through merger and that requires court approval. So through a court order, we will merge the SRCs with Fabindia,” says Bissell. (How William Bissell is changing the rulebook of business, 2012)

There’s one thing that works in Fabindia’s favour. The brand has been built on the foundation of ‘social mission’. “Any smart investor will understand that if we take social purpose out of our business that would take away the soul of the brand,” Bissell adds.

Bissell is doing the best he can, believes Vineet Rai, CEO, Aavishkaar, a social venture capital fund. “His model is pretty simple - sell products that originate in rural India - and there’s no dearth of that in the country. So the more capital he’ll generate, the more he’ll be able to sell.” There’s no dissonance in high-end investors and the company’s larger social vision. Aavishkar has invested in some of the artisan-owned companies that supply to Fabindia. For instance, it holds 23% in Rangсутra which sells crafts of Rajasthani artisans.

Meanwhile, Bissell is preparing Fabindia for the next big change. “All current (retail) models will turn upside down in five years as new search engines (and e-tailing) will allow price comparison and diminish geographical constraints. If you become a commodity, search engines will eat you up,” he says.

To differentiate and survive, Fabindia has to make its social mission even more shrill. Fabindia stores will soon have three themes - education, activism and fun. For instance, it will display its products from different regions highlighting the issues facing artisan and how customers can help by buying those products. Take the case of Khurrampur pyjamas. “We’ll educate customers about that craft by displaying stories around it,” says Bissell. (Pandey, B, 2012). (pictures 15 and 36 give examples of narratives to involve the consumer).

Bissell believes that unlike many Indian companies he doesn’t believe in setting up a department to promote corporate social responsibility.

“If one is very serious about CSR, you may have a vice-president heading it. I find a lot of people doing doublespeak. This creates dissonance both within the organisation and outside. This inclusive approach defines our brand and gives it great value. If you do what you believe in, it defines you,” he says.

He is convinced that involving artisans and sharing the benefits of growth with them is the most sustainable of all models. Without that, the market-based system - in his view it is the best system to alleviate poverty - is in danger of being “discredited”.

He quotes Raghuram Rajan’s book to argue that India has moved from phony to crony capitalism and that no one is giving real capitalism a real chance. “If capitalism is inclusive, its chances of getting a bad name go down,” says Bissell. He is giving the final touches to his own book, Reimagining India (Bhargava, A, 2008).

Exhibit 1 – illustrates the supply chain of the company. The weaver who is also a shareholder in his regional SRC weaves some yardage and presents it to the SRC. The SRC then calls in the designers who approve the fabric and proceed to develop it further. They work with the weaver for a couple of weeks and develop more samples. These developments are presented by the designer to the Product Selection Committee . The designs are approved and the cost is then finalized. The quantity of fabric to be produced is pre-determined by the software based on minimum stock requirement ratio and the order is given to the weaver to produce the fabric. The weaver produces the requisite fabric in a month and delivers it to the SRC. This fabric is then sent to the stores. In the meantime the SRC has replenished the same quantum of fabric from the weavers that was sold to the stores to maintain the ‘minimum stock level’ at the SRC warehouse. The cycle is thus complete. (Singh, R, 2010).

Fabindia’s growth rate had been spectacular between 2004 and 2007. For the year ending 31st March 2004, on sales of Rs 63.14 crore, its profit before depreciation, interest and taxes (PBDIT) was Rs 7.95 crore, and profit after taxes (PAT) was Rs. 3.34 crore. A year later, the sales had risen to Rs 88.57 crore; PBDIT to Rs 12.26 crore and PAT to Rs 5.66 crore. By March 2006 sales had shot up by 46 per cent to Rs 129.39 crore, PBDIT to Rs 18.46 crores and PAT to Rs 7.81 crore. The growth continued to gallop. For the year ending

March 2007, sales had risen to Rs 188.59 crore; PBDIT to Rs 27.21 crore and PAT to a little over Rs 12 crore (Singh, R, 2010).Exhibit 7 shows the increase in profits from the year 1977- 2009.

In the meantime, the SRCs have completed five years. Each SRC is now a public limited company. An Indian banking partner supports them with a banking loan. Fabindia's entire range of merchandise is being purchased from these SRCs located in different parts of India. In due course, they have started to show profits as they have started trading shares. Some artisans who had initially bought shares at Rs 100 were now trading these at Rs 200 to Rs 300. The Jaipur SRC, Desert Artisans Handicrafts, had done well, with their shares trading at Rs 500. Artisans are now able to buy or sell as many shares as they want depending upon their availability. The Rajasthan SRCs have begun experimenting with daily share trading. This was to enable the artisan to treat his share as an asset and to appreciate the value of equity participation. A senior manager says that 14 of the 17 SRCs turned a profit in 2009-10.(Singh, R 2010).

Rangasutra (one of the SRCs) was started by a young social entrepreneur, Sumita Ghose, who has changed the lives of rural women. Her efforts have been documented in a book *I have a dream* that talks about social entrepreneurship. Rangasutra has its origins in a group of NGOs working for the upliftment of poor artisans in Rajasthan. It has two organizations —The first is a private limited company set up in collaboration with FabIndia and Aavishkaar, which takes care of the commercial aspect of the business. The second is a *producer's company*, which organizes the artisans and builds their capacity to handle new products and designs, imbibe new technology, and produce larger volumes at lower costs. Rangasutra's marketing partner, FabIndia, which controls 30% of Rangasutra's equity. The company is on a high growth trajectory, and this has rubbed off on Rangasutra as well. During its first year (2006), Rangasutra's private limited company registered sales of Rs 3 million. For 2007 FabIndia had set an ambitious target of Rs 30 million, but Rangasutra's sales closed at Rs 15 million. A board of directors was constituted with the following composition: AMFPL -- 1 Artisans -- 4 Aavishkaar -- 1 Promoter (Sumita Ghose) -- 1 The Rangasutra SRC was one among 18 such supplier companies initiated by FabIndia. However, this was the only one with an NGO background. The rest were run with purely profit motivation. (Ghosh, S, 2011). Exhibit 2 shows the break-up of the funding of Rangasutra.

Shaila Tyagi, is the CEO of her SRC, Dilli Karigari Ltd. She is a true blue Fabindian. Working out of Okhla, Delhi, she has been associated with Fabindia for over 16 years. "What a joyride I have had", she says exultantly. She was an employee of Fabindia from 1994 to 2007. During those years, she gathered work experience in every department of the company. She started work on the shop floor in the very first store, folding clothes and placing them back in the shelves. She graduated to the cash counter and then spent eight years crunching numbers in the finance section. She admits she did not even know how to load a stapler when she first joined. At finance, she got to know all the suppliers while handling their payments. In 2002 when the central warehouse started she was deputed to manage it. That was where she learned supply chain management. In 2007, when mission plan III began, the central warehouse was converted to an SRC and Dilli Karigari Ltd was incorporated. Shaila opted to become the managing director and gave up her job in Fabindia. Her salary is now coming out of the budget and profits of the SRC. There are two artisans on the board of the SRC and 850 artisan shareholders. In the first year Dilli Karigari did Rs 4 crores of business. In 2008/9, the turnover was Rs 63 crores and profit after tax Rs 90 lakh. (Singh, R, 2010).

Private Equity – broadening the base

Bissell knows that value market-based mechanisms can trigger at the bottom of the pyramid (where artisans form the base of his supply chain). So if Wolfensohn Capital Partners, led by former World Bank chief James Wolfensohn, picked up 8% stake in Fabindia in 2007 and exited last year, L Capital, the private equity arm of the world's biggest luxury conglomerate LVMH Group and Azim Premji's Premji Invest, are the new PE players who have reposed faith in Bissell's model of inclusive capitalism.

The PE companies bring a different kind of legitimacy to Bissell's business model, with financial recognition, good management practices, tech transfers, and in some cases, like in the case of PremjiInvest, an enormous amount of credibility. Despite Fabindia's business model having a social ring to it, investors have

flocked. That's heartening for Bissell who is now well set on expansion and raring to take a dilution of his family's majority stake in the company. "Actually, when it comes to taking a dilution to admit the poor, then you are voting with your wallet. Voting with your wallet is much more serious than voting with your tongue, and they (PE investors) voted with their wallet," he says. (How William Bissell is changing the rulebook of business, 2012).

Future Challenges

As Bissell makes plans to open 150 more stores in the next four years, he's had to think about how to overcome the natural constraints of his business model. While offering his suppliers a chance to own a piece of the company has helped him lock in suppliers, Bissell won't find it easy to scale up. A yard of khadi, the traditional cloth worn by many Indians, takes two hours to weave—and right now Fabindia requires hundreds of thousands of yards a month. Bissell estimates he might need to triple his number of artisans to grow as quickly as he'd like, which would mean setting up several more regional centers. Maintaining the standards of quality would be a challenge. Even if he can solve those two problems, there's still the vexing issue of inventory control. "The whole idea of the Japanese just-in-time inventory is difficult to manage," Bissell says. "Here, it's more like just-in-a-year."

Bissell has been wrestling with possible solutions. One idea is to shift responsibility down the supply chain to the regional centers. His hope is that one day they might be able to do much more in the way of distribution, warehousing, and design. To that end, Bissell has arranged bank credit for these companies so they have access to working capital. And he is bringing some of the centers' employees to Fabindia's New Delhi headquarters for basic business training. The key, says Bissell, is to use what's intrinsic to India. "When you have an appropriate structure," he says, "all the forces flow in your direction and work with you." (Kriplani, M, 2009)

A new regulation passed by the government in early 2006 meant that foreign single-brand stores could enter the Indian market and make a bid for the western brand conscious consumer. In fact Levis, Nike and Adidas were already major forces in the apparel arena. Zara and Mango are also names firmly ensconced in the consumer's mind. As a result, Fabindia would likely face stiff competition in this segment which is estimated to be 16 billion dollars. Some of these competitors are backed by powerful conglomerates such as the Tata Group, ITC and Reliance. Fabindia also faces the prospect of competing with unconsolidated retail – mom- and-pop stores that are deeply embedded in local communities and tailors especially in the smaller towns of India where the bulk of its expansion would take it (in tier 2 and 3 towns). Main competitors include the government supported khadi stores as well as the not for profit stores.

With the domestic furnishing sector growing at 25 percent, Fabindia's facing intense competition here too (Chatterjee, P, 2004). Furnishing giants such as Wellspun and Spaces are making their presence felt. In the sphere of organics, brands like Godrej and Pantaloons will pose a challenge. However Purohit asserts that Fabindia is a drop in the ocean compared to the potential market, "if 1 percent of the Delhi or Mumbai population switched to organic food, we would not be able to meet the demand".

It will be interesting to be see how Fabindia takes on these challenges whilst adhering faithfully to John Bissel's founding mission.

Conclusion

Fabindia currently generates sales of Rs 500 crore a year and its plan, according to internal sources, is to take this to Rs 1,000 crore in the next four. Currently, it has 167 stores and it plans to add 25 to 30 outlets every year, many of them in smaller cities

"Business can be the biggest force of social change and can bring about that change for good," says the 46-year-old, who has also proved to be a consummate businessman. Even if it comes at the cost of Leftist idealism. (Thomas, P, 2012).

“Fabindia did not need to become greater than the sum of its investment in handloom and the artisans that created it. The consequence was that business could only grow slowly, but the philosophy turned buyers and suppliers into joint shareholders of a shared mission.”(Jayashankar, M, et.al.2012).

Fabindia is a brand that is bigger than the company that has produced it. This progress has been achieved without any advertising in the last fifty two years. A truly remarkable feat in this age of obsessive media publicity. This remarkable growth has no precedence in the retail industry in India. Fabindia has set standards for hand-crafted quality products that are being emulated by other brands in the market today. The creation of community-owned companies to secure the supply chain for the vast quantities of products required by Fabindia is being cited in management schools as a dynamic new model of social entrepreneurship. The company's bottom line has continued to grow as have share values in the artisan companies, creating wealth for both buyer and producer, as equal participants in the process. The company is clearly committed to its shareholders, its employees, its customers and suppliers alike.

In 2007 when Fabindia was featured as a case study at the Harvard Business School, William Bissell stated: “We are promoting an alternate vision for the future. It is collaborative (with suppliers) in the true sense of the word; it is participatory (with the customers that share our views); and the products have an intrinsic value proposition as opposed to imposed value... I believe that the only way to alleviate rural poverty is to generate sustainable employment, and the only way to do that is if we run our business in a profitable manner. It seems contradictory that we pursue both a social goal and profit, but I believe that is the only way to do it”.

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Knowledge Management as strategy to reduce start up time loss in Garment Manufacturing using Single Minute Exchange of Dies (SMED)

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Abstract

The world of Fast Fashion has reduced the fashion cycle considerably where the customers demand more variety thereby creating the necessity of quick response in design, product development, supply chain and retailing which can be achieved through shorter lead times and higher style variations that induces low order quantity to meet the demands of fast fashion.

As a result, garment manufacturers worldwide face stiff challenge in handling quick changeover. Many of them find it very difficult to fulfil the demands of fast fashion as their focus mainly lies in enforcing changes in people, achieving low cost production and high quality, waste reduction, or through investment in modern infrastructure.

The demands of fast fashion shall be met through conscious knowledge management in process reengineering and process reallocation using lean tools like Single Minute Exchange of Dies (SMED), Just In Time (JIT), Modular Manufacturing etc. which facilitate enhanced productivity in handling higher style variation and accommodating lower order quantity.

This paper focuses on the importance of Knowledge Management (KM) in SMED as a strategic advantage in the garment manufacturing process to reduce start up loss that is encountered while handling higher style variations that requires effective line planning, continuous training of manpower, maintaining quality standards and reduce productivity loss due to frequent style change over.

Introduction

The Indian Clothing Industry has an overwhelming presence in the economic life of the country and plays a critical role through its contribution to industrial output, employment generation, and the export earnings of the country. Textile is one of the major trading commodities among the countries. Particularly, India is one of the leading exporters of textile goods to many developed countries. Majority of the Indian textile exports is in the form of value added goods like woven and knitted garments, home furnishings and leather garments.

Currently it contributes about 14 percent to industrial production, 4 percent to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and 17 percent to the country's export earnings. It provides direct employment to over 35 million people and is the second largest provider of employment after agriculture in India. Thus, the growth and all round development of this industry has a direct bearing on the improvement of the economy of the nation. [1]

The close linkage of the Industry to agriculture and the ancient culture and traditions of the country make the Indian textiles and apparel sector unique in comparison with those of other countries. This also provides the industry with the capacity to produce a variety of products suitable to the different market segments, both within and outside the nation. In apparel manufacturing, the main focus continues to be on increasing efficiency and productivity by producing large volumes of limited styles, minimal variations and long runs with a focus on the anticipated inventory which marks the push system of apparel consumption. In the current scenario, the Indian textile and apparel industry face stiff competition in the global arena due to increased fashion consciousness of people resulting in pull system of apparel consumption which



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Keywords: Garment Manufacturing, Quick Response, Knowledge Management System, SMED, Style Change Over, QCO, Quick Response Manufacturing



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enforces shorter lead time, low volume multi style orders, shorter fashion cycle and short product lifecycle. Consumers today are familiar with fashion to the tune of Fad, Fast Fashion and High Fashion which compels manufacturers to shorten their production cycle.

Quick Response in Apparel Supply Chain

The world of Fast Fashion has reduced the fashion cycle considerably where the customers demand more variety thereby creating the necessity of quick response in design, product development, supply chain and retailing which can be achieved through shorter lead times and higher style variations that induces low order quantity to meet the demands of fast fashion.

As a result, garment manufacturers worldwide face stiff challenge in handling quick changeover. Many of them find it very difficult to fulfil the demands of fast fashion as their focus mainly lies in enforcing changes in people, achieving low cost production and high quality, waste reduction, or through investment in modern infrastructure.

Fulfilling the customer demands requires flexibility and quick response in apparel supply chain. Quick response is characterised by the ability of a manufacturer in adapting to the changing needs of the customer by developing flexible manufacturing practices thereby building capabilities to handle orders of low quantity and various styles without compromising on the time to market. The significance of quick response can be inferred from the business model that world class retailers like Zara, H&M and Benetton who possess a vibrant consumer base driven by high variations and affordable price.

Devanshu Dutta (2002) in his article titled retail and the speed of fashion says that “the middle-aged mother buys clothes at the Zara chain because they are cheap while her daughter aged in mid – 20s buys Zara clothing because it is fashionable” highlighting the importance of low cost fashion clothing and elucidates Zara as a leader in fashion retailing catering to the needs of consumers of various profile. [2]

Fashion is demarked by creating uniqueness through various aspects including innovative designs, creative patterns, style variations and value additions in small quantity which will induce dearth in the pull system.

Institute for Studies in Industrial Development in its report on Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) CLUSTERS IN INDIA: Identifying Areas of Intervention for Inclusive Growth states that “Indian garment manufacturers had to face stiff competition in order to survive in the global market. The issue related to increase in the share of exports of readymade garments from the developing countries is because of increased possibility of splitting the whole production process into smaller parts, simultaneously producing them in different parts of the world. A complementary trend was a gradual shift from mass production to producing in smaller batches with multiple styles”. [3]

It is evident that garment manufacturers in India have to accommodate to execute low volume multi style orders in order to withstand global competition. Indian Garment clusters viz., National Capital Region (Gurgaon, Noida, Okhla, Faridabad, Ghaziabad), Ludhiana, Tirupur etc, are involved in the making of hi-fashion garments. Due to the shorter lead time they are compelled to source raw material locally or from close vicinity in order to manage an efficient supply chain. Further, manufacturers also focus on lean tools (set of tools that helps identifying and reducing wastes to improve overall customer value) to cope up with quick response in order to meet the stiff targets.

The demands of fast fashion shall be met through conscious knowledge management in process reengineering and process reallocation using lean tools like Single Minute Exchange of Dies (SMED), Just In Time (JIT), Modular Manufacturing etc. which facilitate enhanced productivity in handling higher style variation and accommodating lower order quantity.

SMED as a Lean Tool for Quick Response in Manufacturing

Joseph Turnbull of Worldwide Business Solutions articulates that “The tools of Quick Response Manufacturing provide an incredible advantage because companies can control the supply, manufacturing

and distribution pipelines, based upon actual demand rather than forecasting guesses. This creates a dynamic opportunity for management to strategically attack competition and increase market share, profitability and cash on-hand”. [4]

Style Changeover that characterises the low volume multi style apparel production requires quick response through lean manufacturing processes to fulfil the pulling demands of the consumers. Currently, manufacturers are in a compelling situation as the domestic and export markets are prone to quick response. Handling style changeover is a very challenging task especially to Indian manufacturers who were flourishing by executing voluminous orders during the Multifibre Arrangement (MFA) and Post MFA regime. Hence, they are looking to implement tools like SMED in order to achieve excellence in Quick Response Manufacturing.

Cambridge Dictionary defines Single Minute Exchange of Die (SMED) as “a method for reducing the time it takes to prepare a machine to do a new job: SMED aims to reduce set-up time by improving workplace organisation”. [5]

SMED was developed by Shigeo Shingo, a Japanese industrial engineer who was extraordinarily successful in helping companies dramatically reduce their changeover times. His pioneering work led to documented reductions in changeover times averaging 94% (e.g. from 90 minutes to less than 5 minutes) across a wide range of companies. According to leanproduction.com “A successful SMED program will have the following benefits: Lower manufacturing cost (faster changeovers mean less equipment down time), Smaller lot sizes (faster changeovers enable more frequent product changes), Improved responsiveness to customer demand (smaller lot sizes enable more flexible scheduling), Lower inventory levels (smaller lot sizes result in lower inventory levels) and Smoother startups (standardized changeover processes improve consistency and quality)”. [6]

Changeover involves three processes viz.

1. Run-down period which defines the time interval between the exit of the old style from the production line and the entry of new style in the same line.
2. Setup period indicates the time taken to tune the production line for executing a new style i.e. there will be no production in the line at this juncture. This is characterised by internal activities such as change of machine, Stitches per Inch (SPI), folder, attachments, gauge etc. and external activities vide inclusion of new machine, pre-setting of the machine, loading etc.
3. Run-up period is when the new style is loaded and the output of the line tends to increase.

SMED as a tool for Quick Response works towards better organization and design improvement. Organizational improvements which are people and procedure based are concerned only with reallocating or modifying task and not equipment or product. It happens to be highly knowledge intensive and can be achieved through training and motivation. Design improvements plays equally vital role by focussing on design of the equipment for manufacturing and product design which drive multi-style garments.

Need for a Quick Response Knowledge Base

SMED is used as an effective tool to achieve quick change over in low volume multi-style manufacturing environment. The efforts to achieve change over during planning, preparation and operation are influenced by various factors in Apparel Supply Chain as conceptualised in figure 4.1

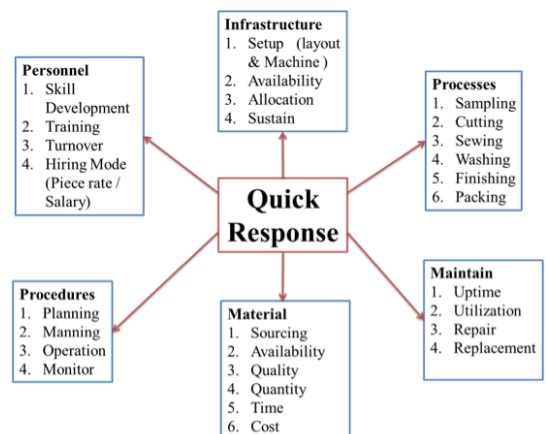


Figure 4.1: Factors considered achieving Quick response
Source: author's elaboration

These factors play significant role in the apparel supply chain and they come in force on each occasion of order execution. Every factor contributes to a great quantum of knowledge that is required to successfully execute an order of less quantity where the production has to undergo changes in terms of these factors mentioned at regular intervals.

Manufacturers receive repeat orders of various styles at different intervals which require similar efforts in terms of planning, setup and operation. The emphasis here is to reduce the redundant efforts involved in Changeover of styles handled through SMED. This may be elucidated with an example as illustrated in figure 4.2.

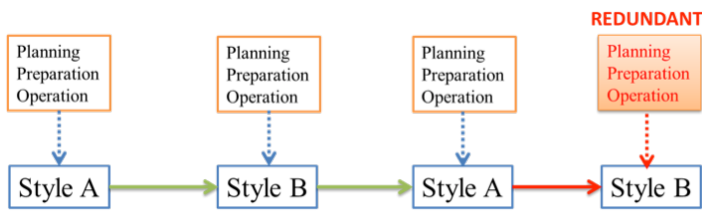


Figure 4.2: Redundancy in Quick Changeover through SMED

Source: author's elaboration

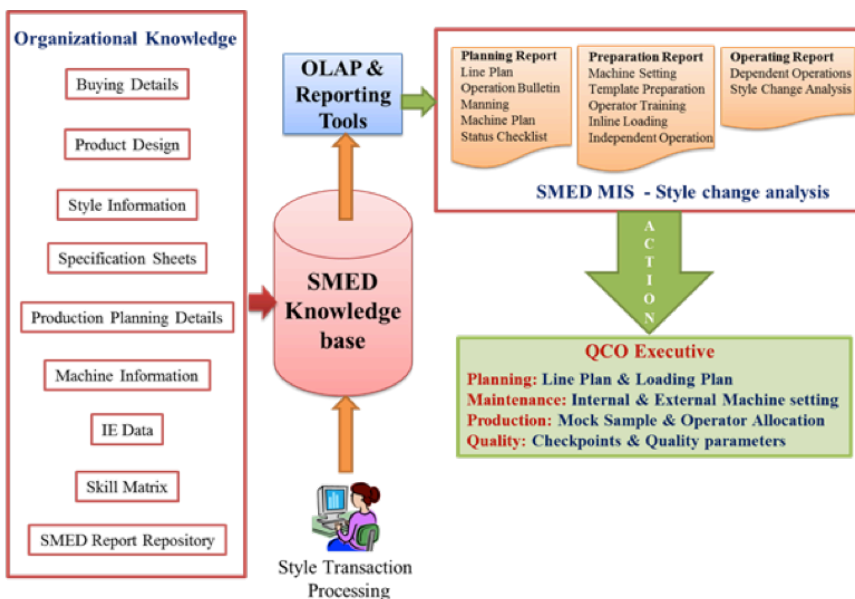
Consider that the line currently runs style A and Style B has to be introduced in the same line for production. The amount of effort required for change over for planning, preparation and execution of style B from style A will be unique in terms of materials, time, operations, manning, infrastructure and layout which are acceptable. Efforts have to be taken even to reintroduced style A on completion of style B in the same setup which is not redundant.

Efforts become expensive and redundant only when style B has to be reintroduced on completion of style A yet again. The start-up loss encountered at this juncture is intolerable since we have passed through such a phase much earlier while loading style B after completion of style A duly following the SMED methodology using the tool kit.

This needs to be looked into vehemently in order to survive global competition faced by the garment industry in terms of cost effectiveness, productivity and efficiency. There are instances when the manufacturer receives orders that are partly similar to those styles that were executed earlier. It is pertinent to note that the efforts are made right from the bottom line instead of reusing the efforts that match the new operations which have already been a part of the older style execution which leads to redundant efforts involving time, energy and cost. This occurs mainly due to the absence of a comprehensive repository of order execution though there are various formats used as part of SMED tool kit to ensure quick response. This emphasises the need for Knowledge Management for Quick Changeover through SMED which will help reducing start-up losses.

Figure 5.1: KMS for QCO

Source: author's elaboration



Knowledge Management as a tool for efficient Quick Response:

Amrit Tiwana (2002) in his book titled The Knowledge Management Toolkit enforces the need for analysis of existing knowledge in an organization by saying “You must begin with knowledge that already exists in your company in various forms.” [7]

In knowledge economy where Intellectual capital is being valued highly, it is important to leverage the organizational knowledge available in explicit and tacit form to achieve excellence in Quick Response Manufacturing. A model for building a comprehensive Knowledge Management System (KMS) for handling quick change-over through SMED is shown in figure 5.1

The organizational memory of apparel manufacturers dealing with low volume multi style orders has to be dynamic and possess high performance to meet the customer demands. In such shorter fashion cycles, manufacturers are expected to deliver goods in shorter lead time with the expected quality and affordable price. The Takt time (time to match the pace of production with that of the customer demand considering the net available work time) in order execution plays a significant role as it reduces with the change of fashion cycle and order quantity and most importantly it is defined by the customer. To meet these challenges, manufacturers has to adopt a strategy that will lead them to reduce the throughput time and increase efficiency and productivity which are directly proportional to the cost of operation.

Manufacturers need to focus on building a SMED knowledge base by capturing data from various segments in a manufacturing environment that includes information from the marketing and merchandising department in respect of sourcing and buyer information. Details pertaining to product design and styles will be supplied by the design and merchandising team whereas, details of garment specifications will be obtained from the Research and Development / Technical team. Data pertaining to pre-production activity will be provided by the planning department while machine details, data of industrial engineering activities and operator allocation based on skill matrix will be provided by the Industrial Engineering Department. The repository of SMED style analysis reports that were generated during execution of various low volume multi-style orders in the past strengthens the organization's knowledge base.

Thus, the apparel manufacturer constructs a SMED knowledge base to create a strategic advantage to handle quick changeover manufacturing by carrying out style change analysis. An Integrating the organizational knowledge enables efficient operational decisions which can be implemented, tracked and controlled for better productivity through various analysis and reporting tools that facilitate the planning of future style changeovers and measure the impact of those plans. On-Line Analytical Processing (OLAP) will carry out the data analysis and summarize the planning, preparation and operation activities considering critical factors including product line, style, setup, machines, people, quality and other key perspectives of garment manufacturing.

The knowledge base grows along with the diverse orders executed by the manufacturer and the system will continue to capture the feasible and efficient practices that will be applied in future.

Figure 5.2 defines the process flow of quick changeover using SMED KMS:

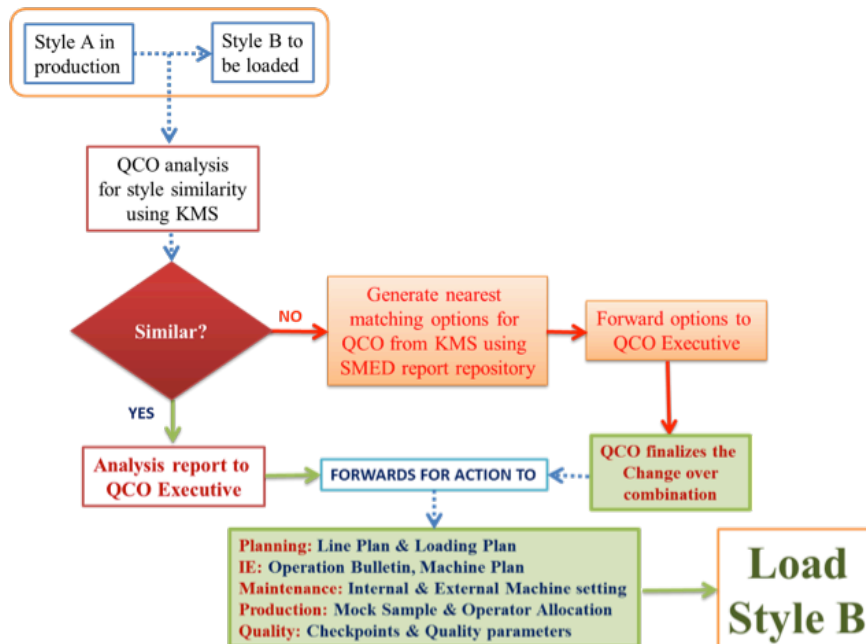


Figure 5.2: SMED KMS - QCO process flow

Source: author's elaboration

Assuming that Style A is currently under production and Style B has to be introduced in the same line on completion of Style A, the Quick change over (QCO) executive has a key role to play in facilitating the Planning, Preparation and Operation activities that enables to load Style B with in Single Digit Minute. To facilitate this, the executive has to prepare and analyse the style changeover considering the specifications of the product to be manufactured, materials to be used, machines to be deployed, manpower to be allocated and quality parameters to be met. Before preparing the style changeover report, the QCO executive should carry out a due diligence to ascertain whether the organization has undertaken similar style change over in the past thereby producing SMED formats to execute the same. If such a report is available in the organizational memory, the KMS will provide the style analysis report to the QCO executive who in turn forwards the same directly to the department concerned for Line and Load planning, preparation of the operation bulletin, machine plan, internal and external machine setting, preparation of mock sample, operator allocation based on skill levels, define quality checkpoints and other quality parameters. This process confirms to the as-is reproduction of available SMED information which ultimately reduces production lap time as it eliminates redundancy of efforts in producing the style changeover analysis report.

In case of such history not existing the organizational memory, the QCO executive has to look for the nearest matching SMED reports from the KMS that hosts the SMED report repository. During this activity, the executive shall be presented with multiple options that emerge from the repository that are close to the current requirements of quick changeover or the specification of the style currently under production. The competency and expertise of the QCO executive is to analyse these options and select the best fit combination that enables to load the new style and reduce the production lap time. This process confirms to the reuse of available SMED information which reduces start-up loss considerably as it minimises redundancy of efforts in producing the style changeover analysis report.

The process flow minimises the redundant efforts that are undertaken while loading new style combination (Style A→Style B) by reusing the SMED information that nearly matching the current requirement and eliminates redundancy while loading pre-executed similar style changeovers by reproducing the SMED reports from the organizational memory. This accentuates the importance of Knowledge Management in QCO through SMED which proves to be a strategic advantage in the garment manufacturing process to reduce start up loss that is encountered while handling higher style variations that requires effective line planning, continuous training of manpower, maintaining quality standards and reduce productivity loss due to frequent style change over.

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The Iconic Merchandise Category: A new concept for fashion assortment planning?

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Abstract

The process of range planning in fashion retailing is fundamentally different to that in fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) retailing because of the need for change in the product range. Fashion assortments intrinsically vary from season to season and often more frequently within the season. The concept of category management which is prevalent in the FMCG retailing has found limited application in the fashion sector (Dewsnap and Hart, 2004) primarily because category management involves the fine tuning of a product range over time. However, one of the underlying principles of the category management concept is the notion that different product categories can play unique roles in the pursuit of overall successful performance of a merchandise assortment. The category management literature describes five roles that product categories can play: cash-flow contributors, profit generators, brand reinforcement categories, destination categories and finally service providers. The extent to which these types of category are applicable to fashion retailers is not well known and it is proposed that the concept of the iconic category may be more appropriate for fashion retailers.

The term brand coherence describes the relationship between existing and new products with the brand identity being central to the ability of a brand to communicate what its products and services have in common in order to create a clear image (Kapferer, 2008). In this context the paper also questions to what extent iconic merchandise categories can influence consumers' purchasing behaviour and their perception of brands.

Drawing upon case study research undertaken in the UK mid-market women's clothing retail sector, this paper explores the adoption of roles within fashion merchandise planning in fashion brands and attempts to establish the characteristics of the role that iconic products and iconic categories might play in this process.

Introduction

Fashion assortments intrinsically vary from season to season and often change frequently during each one; Sheridan et al (2006) describe the fashion industry as volatile and unpredictable, with shortening life cycles and a high level of impulse purchasing. Even though there is some evidence that the throw-away fashion trend has moved on, the need for innovation and newness does not stop (Moran 2012). Furthermore, the immediacy of online retailing seems to be perpetuating the need for frequent injections of stock with a rolling, rather than seasonal approach to range planning. As the global demand for fashion increases, many emerging and high growth fashion markets have a less seasonal, or a different seasonal pattern to those in the traditionally established European and US markets, and so seasonal range planning is generally becoming less dominant. In this changing and challenging business environment for product management therefore, a fashion brand, whether a retailer brand or otherwise, needs an overall framework for assortment planning in order to provide relevance to the brand and to the consumer, whilst maximising profitable sales opportunities.

This suggests that there is need for a strategic approach to product management for fashion brands, but there is scant evidence in the literature to provide a clearer direction about how this should be operationally implemented. In the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) retail sector the range planning technique known as category management has received considerable attention, in both academic and practitioner literature,



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and although it appears to have been neglected by the fashion industry, this paper suggests that a reassessment of this approach, incorporating the concept of the iconic merchandise category could provide some direction for strategic fashion range planning in a global and less seasonal context.

An introduction to category management

The Institute of Grocery Distribution's definition of category management is 'the strategic management of product groups through trade partnerships, which aims to maximise sales and profits by satisfying consumer needs' (IGD, 1999: appendix). This definition highlights the process as a consumer-led process and as such relies on having an understanding of a consumer's relationship with a product type. It takes into consideration for example the level of interest they have in a product category, how customers prefer to shop for products within a category and how different shopping occasions may influence decisions consumers make about buying products within a category.

According to retail-vision.co.uk (2012) category management is the 'pre-eminent technique used by leading retailers and suppliers to deliver their retail strategy and develop new products'. Category management as a process consists of eight steps: defining categories, defining category roles, assessing the performance of categories, setting category objectives, devising an overall strategic plan for each category, specifying tactics for the category, implementing category management and then reviewing the success of the category using performance indicators established in the second step (Rosenblum, 2010). The first stage, category definition, is the process of grouping similar products that the customer expects to see displayed together and in which a meaningful choice can be made. Fashion retailers have traditionally used 'departments' to categorise merchandise, which is useful in terms of developing product expertise and maintaining an overview of product detailing, however, customers may be less inclined to departmentalise their fashion requirements, but be more focused on end use for clothing products when shopping. Category descriptors such as formal occasion, relaxed dressing, casual fashion, and outerwear therefore, may be more relevant for fashion categories. Within individual categories there may be particular product items or stock keeping units (SKUs) that are so relevant to the consumer that they become a draw to the category. In grocery retailing, where product ranges are mainly continuous at SKU level, category definition can be very precise, but even so, some SKUs can appear in more than one category in a large store. For example a particular brand of chilli sauce may be found with all other add-on sauces (as opposed to cook-in sauces), but the same product may also be found in a category for Mexican-inspired dining.

The second stage of category management is also about definition, but moves from grouping products from a consumer selection viewpoint to an assessment of the relationship between a category and an overall retail brand. A judgement is made about a category in terms of the role that the particular category plays in an overall product assortment. Varley (2006: 49) summarizes roles that have been most frequently cited in category management articles, as shown in Table 1. The concept of category role-playing is the focus of this paper and so this stage of the process will be returned to later on.

Table 1: The role of the product category

Source: Varley 2006:49

Retail brand reinforcer	New categories; high fashion categories; high technology categories; includes strong (retailer or manufacturer) brands; create excitement and theatre in store
Cash-flow contributor	Established categories; non-symbolic categories, consistent value provision
Profit generator	Growing categories; fashion categories; symbolic categories; high profit margins
Service provider	Stagnant or declining categories; well established market leading brands; competitive with other category providers; low profit margins
Destination	Growing or well established categories; contains leading brands; deep and wide assortment; considered the best retail offer by target customer

The next three stages in the process involve category planning. This starts with a performance evaluation of categories, based on financial measures such as sales, profits, and markdown. Given the qualitative nature of category role definition non-financial performance such as a category's ability to build store traffic should also be part of this process. Performance evaluation should also take into account the maturity of the category within its lifecycle, and benchmarking against competitors' offers. The potential growth of the category within the market overall, and the forecasting of innovation within the category are also required in order to be able to make an objective evaluation of performance. The category management philosophy encourages suppliers and retailers to work together in category planning and it is at this stage in particular that a supplier's category insight can be very valuable. After the performance evaluation has been completed, strategic objectives and development plans for each category are generated, which might include increasing awareness or building growth for example, and then an operational category retail marketing mix is drawn up, which covers space allocation, display plans, promotional plans, and so on. The final two stages of the category management process are implementation including assigning of personnel to manage the category, and finally reviewing the performance of the category in the light of the performance evaluation methods chosen and the objectives set.

Applicability of the category management concept to fashion

While most of the grocery retailing adoption of category management has been focused on getting the detail of the product SKU's within the category optimized, it is category management's concern with the role of the whole product category within a retailer's range and the contribution a category can make to the strategic positioning of a retail brand identity (Varley 2006) which is likely to be of most interest to fashion retail brands. Product categories themselves have different characteristics, which mean that they need to be managed in different ways in order to achieve optimum profitability. Some categories may be dominated by premium brands (trainers for example), whilst others such as loungewear might be more value driven. It is proposed that fashion brands might use category management in the pursuit of product differentiation to gain a competitive advantage over rivals and that there is potential for them to work with suppliers who understand their retail market positioning to improve their performance. Dewsnap and Hart's (2004) case study of a category management application in the lingerie sector concluded that category management could offer distinct opportunities for fashion retailers to work with their suppliers and generate sustainable competitive advantage.

It can therefore be suggested that product categories can be strategic, and that strategic categories can be managed to optimise short, medium and long term financial performance. They can also enhance an image of creativity, innovation and excitement, with category orientated displays being used to reinforce strategic product category positioning for a brand (Varley, 2006). The underlying principle of the category management concept that different product categories can play unique roles in the pursuit of an overall successful performance of a merchandise assortment is interesting and reinforces Kapferer's (2008) notion that the relationship between brands and the product assortments that represent them must be managed carefully and strategically.

Little is known about the application of category management in fashion. In 2004 Dewsnap and Hart found that there was no evidence in academic literature or from industry sources that category management was being used in the fashion sector; however they suggest that the concept is relevant and could be useful. Sheridan et al (2006) concur, and suggest that category management could help fashion companies to develop responsive merchandise strategies. Jackson and Shaw (2009) are of the view that there are no prescribed ways to categorize and analyse fashion merchandise but consider clear logic and experienced management to be the main facilitators of good merchandise planning and practice, which would seem to give support for a systematic and evaluative approach such as category management.

However, Dewsnap and Hart (2004) advise that fashion brands should be flexible and pragmatic when applying category management as the process can be viewed as inflexible. Retail-vision.co.uk (2012) also suggests that category aims need to be developed with consideration for a business' own resources and

capability. This view is endorsed by Rosenblum (2010) who suggests that category management has lost credibility more recently because of its complexity and the need in highly competitive retail business environments to resort to the fast implementation of tactical marketing initiatives. However he highlights the importance of category roles in the evolution of merchandise planning by saying that in this transformation to short term initiatives 'the importance of category roles and their ability to be the glue across strategy and tactics was lost'. The extent to which the category roles established in the context of the FMCG industry are applicable to fashion retailers is not known but the principle of determining category roles within an overall merchandise assortment would seem to provide a framework for strategic analysis of product assortments whilst providing flexibility for short term and/or responsive initiatives.

According to Rosenblum (2010) and retail-vision.co.uk (2012), category roles are essential for maintaining a consistent strategic and tactical plan which provides cohesive marketing intents across price, promotion, space and assortment. Retailers that follow this approach send a clear message to their shoppers regarding their unique point-of-difference, have greater shopper satisfaction and drive sales. The IGD are also confident about the relevance of category management today, stating that 'the principles are more relevant than ever' (IGD.com, 2012). Their communication goes on to say that robust and well-implemented category strategies with a consumer-led orientation will continue to add real value to businesses. 'In 2013, the best category visions will show an understanding of shopper attitudes, behaviours and needs at a more macro-level than ever' (IGD.com 2012).

Although Kapferer (2008) does not advocate category management per se, his writings come close to suggesting that the category is a useful concept when analysing the strategic relationship between brands and products. He suggests that in order to manage product resemblance through brand identity, range diversity through product extensions and developments, and brand coherence without creating uniformity, brands might refer to cognitive psychology and the way people think and form categories. He advocates that not all products represent the brand in the same way and to the same degree.

Product and Brand Coherence

According to Kapferer (2008) consumers' perceptions of brands are built through the coherence of repeated experiences over time. He emphasises that the first contact a consumer experiences with a brand becomes a determining factor in the formation of a long-term image of the brand, embodied in the product and services encountered. It is suggested this product/brand relationship must be managed carefully and strategically 'there is no brand without strong internal policing and without a strong external coherence as well' (Kapferer 2008: 280).

Kapferer continues to say that brand building involves creating a perception of specificity of the brand, which brings exclusivity and motivating added value for customers. The repeated experience and coherence over time reinforces the brand values through products, which may be diverse in terms of the categories in the range, but 'tell perceptibly the same story, each in its own way' (Kapferer 2008: 280). Brand messages transmitted through marketing communications reinforce the strong coherence externally. This internal and external coherence therefore reinforce a brand, which paradoxically, becomes the source of its own coherence.

Jackson and Shaw (2009) emphasise the importance for fashion brands to demonstrate a clear and understandable product range at the customer interface, suggesting that overcrowded and confused fashion product offers can often drive customers away whilst limited ranges run the risk of being perceived as narrow and uninteresting. Kapferer (2008) concurs, suggesting that repetition should not mean uniformity and boredom and that diversity, innovation and surprise are ingredients that stir up interest in a brand but warns that too much diversity can lead to inefficiency, dispersal of management resources and a fuzzy perception of the brand.

The concept of brand extension is well known in fashion; a brand that is recognised and valued by consumers can capitalize on the power of its name to grow through leverage (Liu and Choi, 2009). Posner (2011) for example refers to the concept of core and peripheral brand extensions, and unrelated brand stretching.

Whilst logical, this strategy is not without risk, however, and potentially takes scarce resources away from the main range categories and results in being perceived by customers as irrelevant. Nevertheless, failing to respond effectively to changes in demand within established categories runs the risk of simply carrying on offering what customers do not want (Jackson and Shaw, 2009). According to Kapferer (2008), brand coherence is rarely taken into account when new product projects are evaluated, suggesting that they are selected instead on the basis of sales and profit potential in a particular marketing channel or geographical region. However, meeting the challenge of how to manage diversity without losing brand identity, and how to introduce variety without losing the brand's specificity, is a strategic merchandise management issue.

Kapferer proposes that at the conceptual level it is necessary to distinguish between those facets of a brand's identity that are essential to its core, and those that are not necessary, which can be called 'peripheral'. Throughout the development of a brand, its identity is expressed through product examples. The primary best seller becomes the brand's prototype; the living and recognised symbol of the brand's essence. The brand can then enlarge the circle of its product variation by introducing lines that are transformations of the brand, but remain coherent with the brand (Kapferer, 2008). This paper however argues that a brand's prototype should not be the best seller in terms of product, but the brand icon(s) in terms of merchandise category.

Van Der Vorst (2004, cited in Kapferer, 2008) suggests that the relationship between brands and products can be analysed using the concepts of distinctive and generic in terms of product facets, and core and peripheral in terms of brand facets. These concepts would seem to be highly relevant for fashion merchandise planning. The distinctive product facets are those that strongly communicate a brand's identity, while the generic product facets are those features that are easily and often replicated by alternative or competitive brands; core brand facets can be considered to be those aspects of a brand that are found in all product category embodiments of a brand, while peripheral facets are those only relevant to a specific category. Combining these concepts with those of the established category management roles outlined in Table 1, a matrix for fashion category roles has been developed and recommendations and implications for merchandise management are included in the table.

Table 2: Proposed category role matrix for fashion brands
Adapted from R van der Vorst 2004, cited in Kapferer (2008: 285) and Varley (2006:49)

		Brand	
		Core	Peripheral
Product	Distinctive	<p>Iconic Maintains all major brand facets in every product within the category. The identity of the brand is distinctive through the product category. Product and brand coherence is strong. Category acts as a destination for consumer purchase of brand. A deep assortment is recommended. Strategic brand communications should feature products from this category. Visual merchandising should feature products from this category, but they should not dominate all displays.</p>	<p>Aspirational /Occasional Only some brand facets may be included, and may be blended with other facets which are more related to specific product categories. Coherence between brand and product is apparent. Category acts as excitement creator; the brand embodiment may be new, innovative and /or adds interest. A deep assortment is recommended Strategic brand communications should feature products from this category. Visual merchandising should emphasise the category.</p>
	Generic	<p>Extension All major brand facets are present, but the product category does not have strong coherence with the brand; many other brands are competitive in this category. The category is established and may be growing in the market and/or be on trend. A shallow assortment is recommended, with the potential to deepen. Products from these categories can appear in brand communications and visual merchandising, but they should not be dominant.</p>	<p>Convenience/Staple The category may or may not have strong coherence with the brand; other brands may have stronger product coherence, or product coherence has been strong in the past. The brand offers the category as way of delivering service to the consumer. Well established category, possibly with stagnant or declining demand. A shallow assortment is recommended. These categories should not usually feature prominently in strategic brand communications or visual merchandising although they may be used in targeted promotional activity.</p>

Case Study One: Burberry

If ever there was an iconic product the trench-coat is one, however this case study, in the form of a media commentary helps to demonstrate how the concept of the iconic category, as distinct from the iconic product, can help a brand remain relevant yet at the same time hold onto its identity and heritage. In an article entitled 'A tale of two macs' Cochrane (2012) suggests that Burberry's success and Aquascutum's problems are manifested in two coats that are compared in detail.

Figure 1: A comparison between two trench-coats

The point the article makes is that whilst both coats have five rows of brown buttons, buckled sleeves, storm flaps, belt, a checked lining and look remarkably alike, one of the 'beige macs' has hugely outperformed the other. The author suggests that not only is the Burberry trench 'shorter, sharper, loucher (that belt), perkier' (Cochrane, 2012) but it is known to be worn by celebrities such as Victoria Beckham and Emma Watson and comes from a brand with one of the most high profile design directors in the fashion world, Christopher Bailey. She adds that the Burberry coat says 'now', whereas the Aquascutum says 'then' (Cochrane, 2012).

The adoption of the iconic category as a concept, whether conscious or not, has allowed Burberry to update and adapt within this key product area to provide variety, innovation and excitement. Aquascutum, it is suggested has not, maintaining a heritage product that remains historic and classic but not as desirable. To continue with an application of the matrix to Burberry, it could be argued that perfume, wool jackets and bags are aspirational /occasional categories, small accessories are staple categories, separates and dresses are extension categories and wool scarves would join trench-coats as iconic categories.

Case Study Two: Reiss

Reiss is the eponymous fashion brand founded, owned and run by UK retail entrepreneur David Reiss. The company's early origins were in shirt manufacturing in the early nineteen seventies followed by wholesaling and retailing of menswear in the 1980s. The launch of women's-wear as a mainstream retail category as opposed to a capsule collection happened in 2000 since when the company grew steadily and organically until 2005, when it started a serious international retail expansion programme. Positioned as a bridge brand, with design led, luxurious product and what is termed 'high street prices', Reiss has carved a niche in the UK market as aspirational and stylish yet accessible (Berwin, 2007).

As the company has grown, many different categories have been trialled, but the company's early success was the appeal of loosely cut men's suits made from elegant and fashion forward fabrics. The suit has remained an iconic category for Reiss and, in what is normally considered to be a high risk and difficult move to position a brand further upmarket, Reiss recently introduced personal suit styling for its male customer in a small number of top stores. The new (for Reiss) made-to-measure service offers the customer a choice of over 40 fabrics, a vast selection of jacket and trouser styles, and detailing such as pockets, belt loops and fasteners according to choice (Nichols, 2010). Whilst this is not Savile Row bespoke tailoring, it does combine two growing trends in fashion: investment dressing and mass-customisation. In a similar way to Burberry, Reiss is maintaining innovation in the category that is the historic basis of the company's success to ensure that a key product area maintains excitement and consumer relevance, as well as complete brand coherence.

The women's wear range from Reiss has always featured dresses as a central category, and the brand has gained a great reputation for elegant day dresses and stylish and sensuous evening variations. The recent royal endorsement has helped to reinforce dresses as a second iconic category for Reiss (Fox, 2011).

Figure 2: Kate Middleton meeting Michelle Obama, in Reiss 'Shola' dress, May 2011

Accessories is another very successful category for Reiss, with outerwear and formal separates also being central to the overall assortment; however these categories do not play the role of the iconic category in the way that dresses and men's suits do. Furthermore, casual clothing is an area that the company has been keen to trial, focusing on this category in particular with a sub-brand Reiss 1971. The casual wear category



Figure 1 A comparison between two trench-coats

Source: Cochrane 2012.



Figure 2: Kate Middleton meeting Michelle Obama, in Reiss 'Shola' dress, May 2011

Source: Fox, 2011

does not appear to have the same brand coherence however, and the sub-brand, in spite of considerable management and marketing support, has not fully resonated with either existing or the intended new, younger customer. There seems to be some confusion surrounding the casual fashion product; in 2010 the company appeared to be moving to shorter lead times with the inclusion of trend-led, must have items (Weir and Santi, 2010) but this strategy seems to conflict with a comment made by Reiss in the same year: 'We are trying to move ourselves as far away from that [the fast fashion] end of the market as possible' (David Reiss quoted in Edelson, 2010). With this kind of confusion and challenge going on in the casual clothing category, Reiss can depend on its iconic categories to maintain the brand identity and the core brand values to which the customer is so loyal. The iconic categories are also supporting the brand's global expansion which is taking it to important fashion cities such as Moscow, New York, and Hong Kong, and markets such as the middle East where the demand for luxury products is high and in these new markets Reiss is finding it possible to extend its price points upwards (Edelson, 2010). So whilst Reiss may have been trying to move their brand to a new place in its home market via edgy advertising of peripheral products, the serendipitous endorsement of the brand by the Duchess of Cambridge may have prevented the company's brand directors overlooking the value of this merchandise category on which it can depend for long-term stability and success, and global brand coherence.

Conclusion

This exploratory and conceptual paper concludes that while category management in its pure form remains difficult to implement for fashion retailers, the principles associated with it would seem to be a logical and appropriate way to underpin the management of increasingly unseasonal fashion assortments. Many retail brands are faced with international category planning which is a new or developing area of competence, and it is suggested that iconic categories could play an important role in this. Local reinterpretations of a brand, not to mention demand for new products will inevitably arise under the cover of better meeting the demands of consumers in different international markets (Kapferer, 2008) and will put pressure on fashion brand managers to police category interpretation. In market and product extension strategies implemented in the pursuit of growth, brand coherence is a concept that must remain at the forefront of product management. The iconic category concept allows brands to maintain coherence, whilst updating, innovating and responding to consumer demand and nuanced preferences.

The matrix proposed in this paper provides a conceptual framework in which fashion brands and their supply chain members can work together to deepen understanding of customer brand perception in all category manifestations, and build competitive advantage through the introduction of meaningful and profitable product variations. The application of the suggested category roles, and in particular the role of the iconic category, seems to resonate well in the context of strategic fashion management. The framework includes operational recommendations and implications for merchandising management in order to create and maintain internal and external brand coherence, and whilst it puts less emphasis on category roles as drivers of sales and profits than previous iterations, it is suggested that appropriate management of categories according to the strategic roles in this matrix will bring good financial performance in the long term.

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Fashioning Tradition for Iconic Businesses

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Abstract

Indian fashion in the last decade has seen a reversal to traditional clothing with increasing number of men and women wearing dress with Indian styling and embellishment. Designers are using local fabrics, traditional styles and ethnic embellishments to create fashion, which is unique to the country. The paper introduces the Indian Fashion Industry and details the use of ethnic influences in designer collections and highlights tradition as one of the important parameters, which has helped fashion businesses to attain an iconic status.

Operating a business while crusading the cause of tradition makes for a thriving business model for the fashion brand – ‘Sabyasachi’. This paper uses the example of Sabyasachi Mukherjee, a young, successful and dynamic designer whose collections are framed within traditional boundaries. The setting up and growth of his fashion business and the reasons behind the phenomenal growth since its inception in 1999 are discussed in this paper. The paper attempts to detail how innovative product development, marketing and a strong connect with people’s beliefs; ideas and convictions have been woven together in the building of an iconic brand. Preserving the core ideology of ‘Indian-ness’ in his collections and using tradition as an anthem the business has grown to be one of the most important design labels in India.

A case study methodology is employed to critique the use of Indian concepts in **Sabyasachi’s** fashion lines, which have helped to create unique styles, which cannot be compared with other designers. Secondary sources, which include magazines, newspapers, television, fashion shows, and primary sources like personal interview are used for collating the data. Narrative data from interviews and visual and other secondary sources would be analyzed for evaluating the iconic business model adopted by Sabyasachi.

Introduction

In a world of blinding excesses, rapid globalization and fleeting fashions, several iconic fashion businesses have chosen to reinvent conventional notions of luxury, trends and fashion by going back to their heritage. By creating fashion that honors the past yet breathes in the future, they are selling more than just a product – they are selling a story, a legacy and ultimately, authenticity. Perhaps this departure into heritage and nostalgia is a reaction to the recent economic uncertainty and technological change, a response to the craving for authenticity in a world that is increasingly artificial.

“The more contrived the world seems, the more we all demand what’s real,” argue James Gilmore and Joseph Pine in their seminal book *Authenticity: What Consumers Really Want*. “As reality is qualified, altered and commercialized, consumers respond to what is engaging, personal, memorable — and above all, authentic.” (Gilmore and Pine, 2007)

Customers want to know what is behind the brand – what it can give back to them. Sometimes it’s just a question of value: the best quality for the price. And sometimes when it is a famous brand, they are paying to be part of the story. Flaven explains that iconic brands create their own narratives, it resembles a novel that you, the consumer, can enter.” (Tungata, 2008)

Indeed, from Gucci to Burberry to Sabyasachi, when it comes to iconic fashion businesses, reviving history and heritage is undoubtedly the business model *du jour*. However, before we examine designer Sabyasachi’s business model (which follows a cultural branding model as defined by Holt) a fundamental understanding of the Indian fashion industry, its history and its many idiosyncrasies is required.



Dr. Vandana Bhandari

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Keywords: Tradition, Indian Fashion, Craft, Bridal, Heritage, Sari

Indian fashion in the twentieth century has evolved to a contemporary form while drawing inspiration from the rich dress and textile tradition that has existed in the country since the earliest times. When India attained independence from British rule in 1947 there were only a few 'trendy' men and fewer women who wore western dress or fashionable clothing in the country. "These trends were mainly confined to the cities and middleclass elite, only slowly percolating down to small-town and rural India. In villages women continued to wear saris or their traditional ethnic costumes, denoting caste, community, and region; while men shifted to trousers and shirts for office wear, but still also wore dhotis and pajama-kurta." (Tyabji, 2010)

The 1960's to 1980's were a time when youth experimented with fashion and borrowed heavily from the west. Western style apparel and stitched Indian dress was however not available readily. A pair of Levis was on everyone's wish list when a relative traveled abroad. Thus, it was natural that the early designers in India attempted to think of fashion as an entity for the creation of western apparel influenced predominantly by international trends and the flourishing Indian export industry. They created seasonal lines, swaying between western and Indian sensibilities. While the former created some waves in the fashion scene it was the latter sensibility that took root and ultimately, translated into sales. The Indian consumer, used to the local tailor who could replicate most styles, was reluctant to pay for mere styling and the focus therefore came on rich and diverse hand-woven fabrics, unique craftsmanship and the degree of embellishment. (Khaira, 2003)

Designers like Ritu Kumar, Abraham and Thakore, Manish Malhotra and Tarun Tahiliani, who were among the first designers in India in the 90's, helped move the industry from a small-unorganized sector to a larger format spread across all segments of the market. It grew into what is recognized internationally as a fashion industry by 2004 and was estimated to be earning revenues of 61 million USD (KPMG Report, 2003) with its own fashion weeks, strong manufacturing processes, fashion schools and extensive retail presence along with Indian designers' first foray into international fashion. National Institute of Fashion Technology established in 1986 and the Fashion Design Council of India in 1998 helped in establishing the industry status of fashion business in India. (Bhandari, 2010)

Most designers found greater scope for experimentation and luxury embellishment techniques within the wedding market. They created garments in beautiful brocades, fine silks and georgettes, adorned with innovative gold and silver embroidery techniques to create exquisite masterpieces difficult to replicate. A combination of fashion, couture and tradition, such collections were an instant hit with the nouveau riche Indian bride willing to spend exorbitant amounts for the unique design and imminent status that came with sporting designer wear in India. Consequently, this segment went on to become the most profitable part of the Indian fashion business. "Bridal wear is big business, the only business. Without bridal wear, many Indian designers would be dead," designer Rohit Bal, explains. "Fifty percent work is bridal wear." (Vasudev, 2012)

Sabyasachi – An Iconic Business?

Operating a business while crusading the cause of tradition has made for a thriving business model for the fashion brand – 'Sabyasachi'. Known for his signature vintage Indian sensibility, designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee is compelling his contemporaries, in India and abroad, to consider and honor the role of tradition in fashion. The 38-year old designer gained recognition in the fashion industry with his debut collection in the year 2002. The spectacular show made him an instant celebrity and his brand something to contend with.

In the ten years since, he has labored to build a brand that is synonymous with the very definition of an iconic business. The crux of iconicity is that the person or the thing is widely regarded as the most compelling symbol of a set of ideas or values that a society deems important. (Douglas, 2008). Arising from a convergence of sociological and psychological aspects it has all the crucial components that Nigel Hollis (Millward Brown) specifies must be met for brands to achieve iconic status - strong cultural roots that tap into society's values; physical or symbolic features that make them instantly recognizable; and a compelling

story that remains true to their original values and beliefs while reinterpreting them in light of contemporary culture.

The house of Sabyasachi articulates the message of creating classic and beautiful clothes by reviving, sustaining and contemporizing the traditional crafts of India. The design philosophy and focus on India's supremacy in crafts and its longstanding traditions is reiterated time and again in the collections presented and in all public communication.

The secret ingredient in Sabyasachi's label is the purity of form, and the focus on exquisite ornamentation and luxe fabrications that elevate simplicity to divine luxury. The fundamental essence and aspiration here is the juxtaposition of simplistic, yet innovative and imaginative design married with an heirloom nostalgia that perfectly captures the future-historic mood of this era and creates 'identity myths'. India is at the center of his story, a story that for the consumers is simultaneously a way of life and an empowering investment in celebrating India. Andy Wright says that, "An iconic brand plays a valued role in a consumer's life. It delivers a feeling that the consumer just can't get from any other brand. That feeling may be security, safety, familiarity, excitement, satisfaction, indulgence or many others."

Commercial Success

It is vital to achieve the correct balance between marketing and creativity regardless of the type of business. Jean Paul Gautier says, "I don't understand people who say business and creativity are not compatible". (Tungata, 2008)

"I am not India's most talented or creative designer. But I am India's most influential and powerful commercial designer" says Sabyasachi of himself and the philosophy which guides his brand. "In the last ten years my company has had a vertical rise. I started with two tailors in 2001 and today there are 400 people working in my factory. In 2006 my turnover was 6–7 crores, and in 2012 we will be closing at close to 70 crores (1.3 million USD), so that is how the business has grown. It has needed me to make a lot of decisions because it is a one-man show and I have been the driving force behind the company."(Bhandari, 2011)

Sabyasachi's path since his 2002 debut has been a study of strong strategic instinct and good business acumen. His early interest in Indian retail business has paid dividends. He has been able to understand the pulse of the Indian market quickly, while other veteran designers; also front-runners in bridal wear took years to disrobe India's wish list. He genuinely believes that people are most comfortable when they are rooted to tradition and it is easy to convert them to the cause of India than to tell them how to carry off Dior gowns. (Vasudev, 2012)

He is today the number one wedding wear designer in the country. In the last few years he says that- "I expanded my bridal business. I increased the quality of my clothing by about 20 percent, decreased the price of my clothing by 30 percent, and there was 50 percent more value that the customer was getting. As a result I took business from every designer in the country. In the recession of the past three years the company has grown by 400 percent in terms of number of people employed and turnover-wise in the company. I am still optimizing that growth and so my primary market is still India."(Bhandari, 2011)

Competition from International Labels and the Effect of Globalisation

Over the last decade, there has been a growing influx of international labels in India. From the mass market retailers like Gap and Zara to the decidedly luxury brands Jimmy Choo and Louis Vuitton, these labels have brought with them an increased awareness of global fashion and trends and instigated in Indians the desire to be a part of the ubiquitous search for the latest 'it' bag, shoe or dress. Easy access to international fashion brands coupled with increasing purchasing power is both a blessing and curse for any developing economy and especially India's developing fashion industry.

Whilst high street retailers like Mango and Zara lend themselves well to the contemporary Indian casual and work wardrobe, it is the higher end labels like Burberry and Prada that the majority of the Indian designers have to compete with. Though their products are poles apart, both these sectors are vying for the

same consumer's loyalty who, before every buying decision compares the two on price and perhaps more importantly, image level. It then comes down to the age-old value-of-investment theory, with the customer deliberating investing his two or three lakh rupees (4000-5000USD) on a Sabyasachi saree v/s a pair of Jimmy Choo's or a Louis Vuitton bag. The result varies with each buyer, yet when the Indian designer's product does win over that of the international luxury conglomerate, it is almost always a result of its characteristic Indian aesthetic, timeless styling and traditional craftsmanship.

"There is a certain DNA that cannot be taken out of the country," explains Indian fashion critic Bandana Tewari. "We do have a forte that lies in handicraft, in decorative arts, in embellishments, in technique. But what designers started doing was to not use them literally: they took little bits of it and used it in fluid silhouettes. They brought forth this very coherent vision of India." (Tewari, 2012)

The modern Indian consumer celebrates this intrinsic indigenous quality to the Indian lifestyle with every buying decision. However, local traditions and styles do not stand still and in a bid to appeal to the nascent Indian market, international luxury labels too are inspired by the countless facets of India's rich textural and cultural eccentricities. Gucci's limited-edition 'Made for India' series catered to the somewhat bling-bling Indian sensibility; Bottega Veneta's India Knot clutch, inspired by the architecture of India, was an instant sell-out and Hermès created a capsule sari collection which worked as the perfect launch pad for the legendary French label in India. These businesses realized early on that paying homage to the traditional heart of the modern Indian buyer is the key to creating a loyal client base in the country touted to be the next economic superpower.

The designer Sabyasachi had the foresight to recognize and understand the competition and set about wooing the burgeoning Indian market with the classic cuts, rich colour and masterful handwork that has come to constitute the core of his business. 'A property, a fast car, a piece of jewellery and an Indian garment, these are the things people invest in', he asserts.

As Poornima Vardhan, GM - Brand Strategy and Retail Planning at Genesis Colors, rightly put it in an interview to the New York Times, 'The opportunity in India results not just from the nation's growing economy and rising middle class but because India, unlike most other emerging countries, has managed to retain its clothing traditions even among the upper classes. Although blue jeans are now popular here, their sales are still dwarfed by those of saris.' (Nytimes,2012) 'Iconic brands', like *Sabyasachi* 'are much more durable than fads and fashions and address social tensions'. (Holt, 2008)

"I have been doing Indian clothes for many years and I am still a pioneer. I have not shifted my design aesthetic because an opportunity has come in front of me. So now a group of us, including designers like Anamika Khanna and Ritu Kumar, are perceived as idealistic designers who have always believed in Indianness," says Sabyasachi. "I might be doing Western clothing, I might be doing Indian clothing, but there is always a common denominator, and that is India. If you look at the approach, if you look at the artistry, if you look at the textiles, there's always a strong indigenous feel." (Bhandari, 2011)

The designer also appreciates that he is dealing with a value conscious society. Most consumers here are averse to investing large sums of money in a product that becomes obsolete in the fashion scenario next season. The brand thus creates classics and produces ensembles that can be used again and again "much like a Chanel bag, rather than telling the consumer that you have to replace the product in six months because it is outdated."

Unchanging silhouettes of saris and salwar-kameez are rejuvenated using beautiful and often complicated weaving techniques and embroideries for the conservative consumer who is reluctant to pick up new silhouettes. He uses unusual fabrics sourced from the best weavers in the country, adding textural detailing - 'patch-worked' with gorgeous, painstakingly applied embellishments in a vibrant diverse color palette to evoke the feeling of bejeweled heirloom fabrics with a modern twist.

The 'New Traditional'

Over the past decade, there has been a conscious shift in consumer values, not just in India but also

globally, with people embracing tradition and heritage in an endeavor to discover their identities. A very strong sense of pride in one's roots now co-exists with a very modern and progressive approach to design and the most successful businesses are tapping into this 'new traditional' mindset. The phoenix-like resurrection of iconic British label Burberry, led by Christopher Bailey's appointment in 2001, is testament to the success of this strategy.

'In danger of being consigned to history a decade ago, Burberry has become one of the hottest fashion labels in the world. A major aspect of this reinvention has been Bailey's ability to re-imagine a previously staid and traditional British clothes manufacturer as a brand that could be simultaneously vintage and very much of the moment.' (DesignCouncil.org.uk, 2012)

Recognizing the brand's much loved heritage, Bailey's course for reviving the business was based on a clear understanding of what Thomas Burberry originally stood for- the key being honoring the values of the past while creating for the future. To achieve this, leveraging the brand's long established icons became critical and the Prorsum Knight, the check and the trench coat were renewed with fresh design details and clever marketing. Consequently, these signature products became the breadwinners while supporting the starry new, high fashion and experimental collections Burberry churned out season after season ensuring the label it's moment, or rather decade, in the spotlight. Burberry championed the 'proud to be British' era and seemingly, Sabyasachi is doing the same in India making the traditional silk sari once again the most coveted item of the season. He combines brilliantly his philosophy of reviving traditional weaves and crafts with his unfailing business sense and wants the house of Sabyasachi to be known for vintage saris.

Once we start to compare the two businesses, we find that many of Burberry's strategies are mirrored in Sabyasachi's approach to his label, be it his stance to honour and reinterpret tradition or his decision to pitch the sari as his signature garment, making room for the more adventurous buyer to be enticed by his experimental silhouettes. The similarities in business models don't end here. Both businesses position themselves in the mid-price designer market and target a similar demographic of customers who start at the aspiration level in their 20's and then consistently convert to the loyalists in their mid to late 30s.

Sabyasachi has a clear understanding of the demographic, geographic, and psychographic characteristics of the customer and believes that his customer is most comfortable in Indian clothes. "I don't have a very young customer. Indians start wearing Sabyasachi after they have flirted with fashion. My clients start at around twenty-six years, and the strongest client base is between 35-45 years of age. A person at that point is more stable, more secure, has more money at her disposal, and is more independent and confident – so usually my core clients start to become loyalists with emotional attachments. For any brand in India, that is very important", says Sabyasachi.(Bhandari,2011)

Shopping in India has traditionally has been a social activity, with groups of mothers, daughters, nieces and sisters heading off to the local sari shop together and often spending hours over 'chai and biscuits' discussing the merits of a certain style of workmanship over the other. Thus, most Indian women between the 35-45 age bracket have grown up accompanying their mothers to such shopping expeditions and inadvertently listening to them emphasize the value of workmanship on a saree or watching them help build a relative's trousseau collection with a saree from each region of India. Though the Indian woman now shops at a luxury mall and sips on wine, she is still unwilling to compromise on craftsmanship. Sabyasachi taps into this psyche with traditionally inspired garments that incorporate modern design sensibilities and practicality.

'I care for the cultural stories embedded into the saris warp and weft,' he asserts. No other dress personifies India, as does the sari. A rectangular piece of cloth which drapes sensuously around the upper and lower part of the women's body it embodies tradition. Sabyasachi recognizes that and in recent times the brand has been recognized for its sari. "We are trying to shift more from the trendy and fashionable "designer saris" to that of the more traditional sari".

However, his increasing appeal to the Indian buyer and the ease with which designs can be replicated in a country where textile, craft and skill is so easily available, has made Sabyasachi extremely susceptible to plagiarism. When he did a black and white block printed line with zardozi, even his artisans were concerned

about the ease replication of the technique in the mass market. His collection was a runaway success and he moved on to the next collection. The block prints however became a mainstay in the local bazaars in India on everything from saris and salwar kameez to even bed linen. Well-known high street brands used the concept in their collections and block printing became fashionable in the region where it was originally sourced from – Jaipur in Rajasthan. Perhaps one should simply accept the plagiarism as a sign of overwhelming recognition and demand for the label and its consequent iconic status.

Sabyasachi owes his success to a combination of brilliant marketing tactics – patronage of Indian craft, capturing the imagination of key fashion media with his evocative shows and a discreetly publicized friendship with Indian fashion's largest influencer – Bollywood. Roping in a Bollywood endorsement has long been the inescapable, fail-safe marketing strategy for retail success in India and when the endorsement merges organically with the public image of the star in question; it's the stuff CFOs dream of. It's money in the bank.

Sabyasachi has ensured the relationship he shares with Bollywood's leading ladies Rani Mukherjee and Vidya Balan falls in this category. He is credited with building both actresses' image as the classical Indian beauty through the makeovers, styling tips, ultimately magazine covers during crucial points in their careers. Now at the peak of their careers, their support for the label goes beyond the customary appearance on the front row. From premieres and award galas to personal or family functions, they are often photographed in Sabyasachi garments.

However, his association with Bollywood doesn't end here. He has won critical acclaim for the costumes he curated and designed for films like *Raavan*, *Laaga Chunari Mein Daag*, *Guzarish* and Sanjay Leela Bhansali's landmark film, *Black*, which brought him the National Award for the best costume designer in 2005. Since then, he has expanded his portfolio extensively with producing exclusive range of jewelry for the GAJA brand and TV shows like *Band Baajaa Bride*.

Having shown at London Fashion Week, New York Fashion Week, Miami Fashion Week, Kuala Lumpur Fashion Week, and Mercedes Benz New Asia Fashion Week in Singapore, Sabyasachi has garnered much international acclaim, yet he maintains his focus on the Indian market. There is a timeless artistry in Sabyasachi's ingenious garments, which allows them to exist outside of the defined spaces and times of the fashions and mores of modern society. He fuses his creative genius with the flair of a jeweller in decorating the fabric, the gift of a sculptor in the drape of his textiles and the inspiration of a painter in the application of colour.

With his characteristic interpretation of craft that is much sought after and a continuity of tradition that is refreshing, Sabyasachi continues to grow his business along the path of cultural branding while staying true to the story/identity myth he began with. The timeless story, of an idealistic and romanticized Indian woman, that is slowly shaping the future of Indian fashion.

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Marketing Icons

• The use and power of icons in marketing

II.

The New Fashion Icons: An Exploratory Study of American and Chinese Women's Consumer Response to Diverse Models in Fashion Advertising

Dr. Ben Barry Ryerson University, Canada

Buying and Selling 'Britishness': A discussion on how British brands use 'Britishness' as a marketing communication and positioning strategy to achieve iconic status

Edwin Phiri London College of Fashion, United Kingdom

Barbie, the Fashion Icon of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

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Rebecca Breuer & Katarina Vuletić Amsterdam Fashion Institute, Netherlands

Celebrities as Icons for positioning Indian Men's Suiting

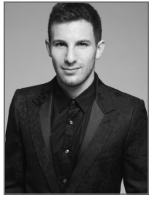
Shagun Sawhney Pearl Academy of Fashion, India

Bollywood Branding: 'Iconic' Marketing and Merchandising of Luxury Fashion & Lifestyles products in 21st Century India

Sharmila Katre & Anuradha Modak Debnath Pearl Academy of Fashion, India

The New Fashion Icons: An Exploratory Study of American and Chinese Women's Consumer Response to Diverse Models in Fashion Advertising

Dr. Ben Barry Ryerson University, Canada



Dr. Ben Barry

Dr. Ben Barry is an Assistant Professor of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at the School of Fashion, Ryerson University. He teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in fashion theory, fashion diversity and entrepreneurship. His research explores cross-cultural men and women's consumer attitudes to models of diverse shapes, ages, races and abilities in fashion advertising. He is currently writing a book based on his research, *Diversity in Fashion: Consumers, Models and Advertising*, to be published in April 2014. Dr. Barry acts as an expert in the media, having been featured in the *Wall Street Journal* and *The Guardian* and on *CNN* and *Oprah*. Prior to his academic career, Dr. Barry founded the first modeling agency in the world dedicated to representing diverse fashion models. He also served as Special Advisor to the Quebec Government where he helped create North America's first charter to encourage healthy and diverse models in advertising. He holds an Honors Bachelor of Arts in Women's Studies from the University of Toronto and a Master's in Innovation, Strategy and Organization as well as a PhD in Management from Judge Business School, University of Cambridge.

Abstract

Researchers suggest that fashion is one of the product categories for which a global advertising strategy is appropriate. They argue that consumers, regardless of their culture, purchase fashion to improve their looks and lives. To communicate this universal aspirational message, advertisers employ fashion models who reflect a singular beauty ideal. Empirical research, however, has failed to reveal whether standardized models are effective in cross-cultural fashion advertising. No available studies have taken a cross-cultural approach within one research design to explore the topic. Guided by the theory of self-construal, my exploratory research examines how 400 American and Chinese female consumers respond to models of diverse sizes, ages and races in fashion advertising.

My focus group results reveal that women's perceptions of diverse models are influenced by two consumer identity positions: age and perceived minority status. My results also elucidate that two consumer values underpin their attitudes: perceptions of malleability and self-enhancing/self-improving motivations. My study advances cross-cultural psychology by suggesting that culture does not exclusively influence self-views. It also contributes to marketing theory by identifying new distinctive traits that influence consumer response to models in advertising. Future quantitative research is required to validate and establish the generalizability of my results. My research underscores the need for international marketers to take a multi-regional, multi-demographic and multi-psychographic approach to fashion advertising development.

Introduction

Marketing literature is replete with debate over how to advertise to cross-cultural consumers. Some scholars assert that marketers should use standardized advertisements because consumers hold universal values (Pelsmacker, Geuensand and Van Den Bergh 2001), or have simply adopted Western beliefs (De Mooij 2003). Other researchers purport that consumers' understandings are congruent with their culture and advertisements should therefore reflect local notions (Zhang and Gelb 1996). Still others argue that international consumers cannot be divided into binary mindsets; their values reflect a combination of global and local perspectives. Marketers are subsequently advised to create advertisements that comprise both views (Hung, Li and Belk 2007)

To resolve this standardization debate, researchers have studied whether the above advertising strategies are effective in particular industries. They have suggested that fashion is one of the product categories for which a global advertising strategy is appropriate (e.g., Domzal and Kernan 1993). Belch and Belch (2003) assert that consumers, regardless of their culture, purchase fashion to improve their looks and lives. One strategy that fashion advertisers employ to communicate this universal aspirational message is the selection of models who reflect a singular beauty ideal (Gauntlett 2002). Consider the two largest consumer markets in the world: the United States and China (Barboza 2010). Despite the size, age and cultural diversity of American (U.S. Census Bureau 2001) and Chinese (Riley 2004) women, fashion advertisements primarily cast young, thin and Caucasian female models (Feng and Frith 2008; Mears 2012)

Empirical research, however, has failed to reveal whether standardized models are effective in American and Chinese fashion advertising. Some scholars have compared Western female consumer response to models of different sizes (e.g., Halliwell and Dittmar 2004; Diedrichs and Lee 2011), ages (Kozar and Damhorst 2008; Kozar 2010) and levels of attractiveness (e.g., Solomon, Ashmore and Longo 1992; Bower and Landreth 2001). Other researchers have examined Chinese consumer response to models of different races (Zhou and Belk 2004) and lifestyles (Hung et al. 2007). None, however, have taken a cross-cultural approach within one research design to explain how women respond to models of different sizes, ages and races. Furthermore, these studies have failed to employ a consistent framework or examine similar model characteristics; comparison within and between cultures therefore remains limited, leaving questions about the effectiveness of standardized fashion models unanswered.

My research aims fill this gap. Given that the cross-cultural effectiveness of standardized versus localized fashion models remains unknown, exploratory research is required to establish the boundaries of consumer responses (Hirschman and Thompson 1997). My study therefore explores the conditions that influence American and Chinese women's consumer response to models of diverse sizes, ages and races in fashion advertising. First, I discuss the theory of self-construal to explain how the mindsets of Westerners and East Asians influence their understandings and delineate my preliminary coding themes. Second, I detail my grounded theory methodology and execution of focus groups. Third, I analyze my focus group results. I reveal the two identity positions that influence women's response to models and the two values that explain their attitudes. I conclude by discussing the implications of my study for scholarly research and fashion marketing.

Literature Review

Research in cross-cultural psychology has focused on how different cultures influence people's identity and subsequent psychological processes. In the theory of self-construal, Markus and Kitayama (1991) offer a framework of two views of the self that are grounded in distinct cultural contexts. Self-construal refers to how individuals define themselves in relation to others according to the principles of their culture. People in individualistic cultures, such as North America, possess an independent self-construal. They perceive themselves as consisting of unique attributes that make them distinct from others (Markus and Kitayama 1991). The notion of the self as independent is ingrained in Western history. During the Reformation, it was proposed that people have distinct God-given purposes to fulfill during their lifetime. It was believed that God gave all individuals unique abilities to enable them to discover and realize this purpose (Markus and Kitayama 1994).

Conversely, people in East Asian cultures have an interdependent self-construal. They view themselves as an extension of their social group because they believe that they are intricately connected to significant others in hierarchical relationships. To be harmonious in any relationship, they must fulfill their specific roles. Inadequate performance of the duties associated with their roles indicates that they are not contributing to the group (Heine 2001). Interdependent individuals therefore strive to conform to the expectations of important others to ensure harmony is achieved within their relationships (Markus and Kitayama 1991). The notion of the self as interdependent is grounded in Confucianism: an ethical system that has defined social relations in China since the Han Dynasty. One of its principles is that people need to observe the five cardinal relationships of father-son, husband-wife, elder-younger, emperor-subject and friend-friend. These relationships were reciprocal; everyone has a responsibility coincident with their roles (Su et al. 1999).

Malleability

Peoples' self-view facilitates how they view their ability to change themselves and the world. Independent individuals stress the malleability of the world relative to the self because, according to their Judeo-Christian history, God gave Adam dominion over the earth; the world existed for humans to change to their liking (Heine 2001). However, independent people believe that their own characteristics are relatively stable and therefore they cannot change themselves (Dweck, Hong and Chiu 1993). They are inclined to view their

attributes as fixed because their uniqueness and autonomy would otherwise be threatened (Heine 2001). Studies reveal that North Americans emphasize the flexibility of the world versus the self (e.g., Morling, Kitayama and Miyamoto 2002).

Conversely, interdependent individuals believe in the malleability of the self relative to the world. They are suspended in a web of relatively immutable relationships that are dictated by Confucianism, and they are required to be responsive to the obligations associated with their roles (Su et al. 1999). Their social world is thereby viewed as permanent and influenced by forces beyond human control (Chiu et al. 1997). However, interdependent people view the self as capable of being transformed through continued effort. The Confucian principle that individuals must fulfill the obligations associated with their roles suggests that they have the potential to master the skills required to adapt to their different role expectations (Heine et al. 2001). Accordingly, since the world is not believed to be at their disposal to alter, they must learn what aspects of themselves to change in order to assimilate into it. Research finds that East Asians stress the malleability of the self relative to the world (e.g., Morling et al. 2002).

Motivations

Individuals' self-construal also shapes their motivations. Raised in an independent culture, people are likely to develop psychological inclinations to self-enhance. Self-enhancement is the tendency to elaborate and exaggerate the positive aspects of the self relative to weaknesses (Heine 2003). Independent people are acculturated to maintain this positive self-view because it provides confidence that they possess the requisite characteristics to fulfill their cultural task of being self-sufficient. It is difficult for people to feel autonomous if they do not see themselves positively; they would feel incapable of surviving in the world without reliance on others (Heine et al. 1999). Research concludes that North Americans are motivated by self-enhancement (e.g., Ross et al. 2005).

Interdependent individuals are more motivated to self-improve. Self-improvement is the tendency to elaborate and exaggerate the negative aspects of the self relative to one's strengths in an effort to correct perceived shortcomings (Heine and Hamamura 2007). Since people in Confucian cultures are linked to each other via relationships, thinking of the self as great infers that one is distinct from others instead of strengthening one's relationships with others (Heine 2003). Moreover, when negative aspects of the self are made salient, interdependent people feel motivated to work harder at correcting them because they want to save "face." Face is critical in Confucian cultures because success is derived from significant others' belief that one is meeting consensual duties associated with their roles (Heine 2005). People are therefore vigilant to fix shortcomings that might reveal that they have failed to fulfill their roles and concurrently jeopardize positive judgments from others (Heine and Hamamura 2007). Studies find that East Asians tend to be driven by self-improvement motivations (Heine, Takata and Lehman 2000).

Research Question

Based on the above discussion of the theory of self-construal, I identify key themes to guide my research questions and analysis (Punch 2005). The theory suggests that two preliminary cultural positions influence American and East Asian perceptions: independence and interdependent. Moreover, the theory reveals that the ability of these cultural positions to elicit individuals' perceptions depends on two initial values: perceptions of malleability and self-enhancing/self-improving motivations. Using these themes to guide my study, I explore what conditions influence American and Chinese women's consumer response to models of different sizes, ages and races in fashion advertising and what values account for their attitudes. It is important to examine these three physical traits because women's understanding of their bodies, which is essential to the presentation of fashion, are influenced by size, age and race (Hurd 2000; Rice 2002).

Methodology

A grounded theory strategy was the most suitable to meet my research objective of identifying the

conditions and values that influence cross-cultural women's consumer response to models because it focuses on generating theory from data (Glaser and Strauss 1967); moreover, it is appropriate when the aim of the research is to discover consumer-based constructs, as was the aim of my study (Hirschman and Thompson 1997). I selected focus groups as the method because they allow the researcher to access ideas that participants deem important by encouraging group debate and dialogue (Punch 2005).

Stimulus Materials

I enlisted six international advertising agents to create authentic mock fashion advertisements. They coordinated photo shoots with models who reflected the size (2 and 14), race (Caucasian, Chinese, and black) and age (15-25 and 45-55) variables that represent and contrast the attributes of the Western beauty ideal. To improve construct validity, the agents controlled for variables that might affect viewers' responses. Each model was photographed with the same facial expression, body position and hair and make-up style as well as wearing the same black dress. I pre-tested the advertisements to confirm that participants perceived the same level of facial attractiveness as well as age and size manipulations (Bower and Landreth 2001).

For the American sample, I selected black and Caucasian models because they compose the two most represented races in American fashion advertising (Millard and Grant 2006). For the Chinese sample, I selected Caucasian and Chinese models because they comprise the two most pictured races in Chinese fashion advertising (Nelson and Paek 2007). I selected models between the ages of 15-25 and 45-55 because the former represents the average model's age (Mears 2012) and the latter reflects one of the largest cohorts in both countries (Egri and Ralston 2004). For both samples, I selected models whose dress sizes were 2 and 14 because the average model is size 2 and the average U.S. woman is size 14 (Vesilind 2009). Since data on the average dress size in China was unavailable, I selected a size 14 model to represent the average Chinese woman because 60% of people in Beijing—where I drew my sample—are “overweight” (Ackman 2004).

Data Collection

My purposive sample (Lincoln and Guba 1985) included American and Chinese women who represented broad demographic traits: age, dress size, race and income. My objective in assembling this sample was to provide the greatest variety of responses because age, size, race and class influence people's perceptions of advertising (Gauntlett 2002). I attracted my sample by using a self-selected snowball method. I placed recruitment posters in community centres and fitness clubs in Beijing (China) and Boston (U.S.). Women's social and professional groups also emailed recruitment requests to their members. To improve the internal validity, my posters did not state the research purpose.

I conducted 80 focus groups that were each composed of five women in the U.S. and China; they were equally segmented by age. In total, my sample consisted of 200 women in China and 200 women in the U.S. Participants had dress sizes that ranged from 0 to 16 and above. In America, 59% of the participants were Caucasian and 41% were black. All the participants in China were Chinese. The average household income of participants was \$60,000 to \$69,000 in the U.S. and 70,000 to 79,000 RMB in China.

Each group was held on a university campus and lasted 60 minutes. To stimulate discussion, participants were shown the mock advertisements. I moderated all groups in the U.S., and a native Chinese facilitator moderated them in China. The groups followed an unstructured format of questioning (Bloor et. al. 2000). Upon arrival, participants completed a socio-demographic form. They were then shown each advertisement and asked how they felt about it. This unstructured method encouraged fresh insights because participants were not influenced by the research question or themes. The focus groups were audio-recorded and transcribed. Notes were also made following each group. The Chinese data was translated into English using back translation (Brislin 1980).

Data Analysis

Two activities guided my grounded theory analysis. My overall approach, “grounded reading in data,” focused on a dynamic interplay between empirical and conceptual realms to construct a new view on the phenomenon under study. My empirical data were enriched by insights generated by past research, but these concepts were adapted to the unique characteristics of the data rather than functioning in an a priori manner. The analysis continued iteratively as I moved between empirical evidence and established theoretical concepts. I aimed to “saturate” all resulting categories with data to show their relevance. I then developed them into a typology (Strauss and Corbin 1990).

Throughout the above process, I analysed the data following the techniques of data reduction, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions (Miles and Huberman 1994). These activities occurred concurrently. Once the data were transcribed, I coded it with descriptive labels to summarise it. I then reviewed all codes and parsed them into fewer codes by clustering themes and making contrasts and comparisons. I also visually organised and compressed the information to reduce the number of codes and develop links. To improve the validity of my analysis, I randomly selected one participant per group to review a summary of findings (Miles and Huberman 1994).

Findings

As I analyzed the focus group transcripts, I discovered an interesting interplay between women’s identity positions and the values that shaped their responses to models. Specially, I identified two key themes that provided a structure for my analysis: 1) *consumer identity positions* and 2) *consumer values*. I define consumer identity positions as the primary demographic or psychographic traits that influence women’s perceptions of models. These include age and perceived minority status. I define consumer values as the core beliefs that underpin women’s evaluations of models. I discovered that these values include perceptions of personal malleability and tendency to engage in self-enhancement or self-improvement motivations. While some of these themes are consistent with my initial codes, others were unidentified in past studies; moreover, my division of the conditions that influence women’s response to models into the categories of identity positions and values was a new and unexpected discovery from my analysis.

In the following section, I thematically analyze participants’ responses. I use identity positions as a starting point and then consider how each consumer value emerged within the data relative to each position. I illustrate each theme with quotations from participants by stating their age, race (W for Caucasian, B for black and C for Chinese), and dress size cohort. I indicate the viewed advertisements by listing the model’s age (Y for younger and O for older), race and size (S for small or L for large). Figure 1 illustrates my typology of the conditions influencing cross-cultural consumer response to models.

Younger Participants

The perception of younger American and Chinese women towards models was influenced by the belief that their appearance was malleable. They positively viewed the idealized model because they believed that they could achieve her appearance—which they thought was more attractive than their own. A participant (14-18, W, 13-14), shown a Y, W, S model, explained: “I can look like this model. If I don’t eat bread for like three months, I can totally be that tiny too.” Conversely, they had negative responses to non-idealized models. They believed that these models failed to transform themselves into beautiful women because they perceived similarities between the models and themselves. A participant (26-35, C, 3-5), shown a Y, C, S model, said: “The model looks very ordinary ... I want to see a model who has changed herself to be prettier than me.”

Younger American and Chinese women’s responses to models expressed self-improvement motivations. They had favorable responses to the idealized model because she inspired them to fix their perceived appearance flaws. A participant (19-25, C, 6-8), shown a Y, W, S model, said: “The model motivates me to lose weight. I want to be as thin as her.” In contrast, they negatively perceived non-idealized models because they felt unmotivated to improve their current appearance. A participant (14-18, W, 6-8), shown a Y, B, L model,

explained: “[The model] doesn’t motivate me to improve how I look ‘cause I already look like her.” Younger women, who had dissimilar traits to non-idealized models, were also unmotivated by them; these models did not possess an appearance that the participants viewed as desirable. A participant (14-18, W, 0-2), shown a Y, W, L model, remarked: “I watch what I eat so I won’t look like [the model].”

Older Participants

Older American and Chinese women’s perceptions of models were influenced by the view that their looks were unchangeable. Older Americans had negative responses to the idealized model because they believed her appearance as impossible to duplicate. A participant (36-50, W, 6-8), shown a Y, W, S model, explained: “I couldn’t ever look like this model. None of us could; we can’t airbrush ourselves to a size two teenager.” Older Chinese participants also had unfavorable responses to this model because they believed Chinese women could not convey Western beauty. A participant (51-65, C, 3-5), shown a Y, W, S model, said: “Girls devote all their time to copying white women’s hair and skin, but they will never look the same; they cannot change the fact that they are Chinese.”

Older participants expressed positive responses to non-idealized models because they did not have to change themselves to duplicate their appearance. Older Americans believed that they could look as attractive as these models because they related to their wrinkles and curves. A participant (36-50, W, 13-14), shown an O, W, L model, remarked: “The model’s a real woman with real hips. I don’t have to change anything about myself to look the same.” Older Chinese women believed that thin Chinese models showed that women were beautiful when they respected their culture. A participant (51-65, C, 9-12), shown an O, C, S model: “This model teaches girls that they don’t have to change their hair from black to blonde to look pretty.”

The perceptions of older women towards models also revealed self-enhancement motivations. Older Americans had positive responses to non-idealized models because they inspired self-confidence. A participant (36-50, W, 9-12), shown an O, W, L model, said: “Seeing a woman my age in a fashion ad makes me feel beautiful.” Similarly, older Chinese women had positive responses to thin Chinese models because they inspired pride in their heritage. A participant (51-65, C, 9-12), shown an O, C, S model, said: “Fashion brands that use Chinese models keep our culture alive.”

Older Americans had unfavorable perceptions of idealized models because they made them feel badly about their bodies. A participant (51-65, W, 9-12), shown a Y, W, S model, said: “I feel terrible when I flip through a magazine and only see ads with models like her. They tell us if you’re over 40, your beauty has expired.” Older Chinese women had negative responses to idealized models because they represented the rejection of their cultural identity. A participant (51-65, C, 15+), shown a Y, W, L model, said: “White models in advertising are the reason girls emulate American culture rather than our own.”

Perceived Minority Status

The responses of black Americans and some younger Chinese participants to models reflected the common standpoint that they perceived themselves as occupying minority status. These women had positive responses to models of their own race/culture because they believed that they could emulate their appearance. A participant (26-36, C, 3-5), shown a Y, C, S model, explained: “I could look as beautiful because we’re both Chinese . . . I always see white models who I will never look like.” Conversely, they had negative responses to the idealized model because they did not perceive her image to be attainable. A participant (51-65, B, 6-8), shown an O, B, L model, remarked: “It’s ridiculous we never see ourselves in fashion. You can’t show a black woman a picture of a white model and tell her to copy it. We’re different—our hair, our bodies.”

Black Americans and some younger Chinese women expressed a desire to self-enhance when they viewed models who represented their race/culture. Black Americans had positive responses to black models because they made them feel beautiful. A participant (51-65, B, 6-8), shown an O, B, L model, remarked: “I

always feel good when I see fashion ads with black models. They're an in-you-face acknowledgement that we're beautiful." Similarly, some younger Chinese women had favorable perceptions of thin, Chinese models because they made them to feel confident about their looks. A participant (19-25, C, 3-5), shown a Y, C, S model, said: "This model makes me proud to be Chinese and proud of how I look ... We never see models like us; they are always white. You feel your beauty is inferior to them."

Conversely, African-American and some younger Chinese participants had negative reactions to the idealized model because she limited their ability to self-enhance. Black women asserted that these models fueled feelings of exclusion. A participant (36-50, B, 15+), shown a Y, W, S model, said: "Ads like this want us to be part of their world, but they have the opposite effect on me; I feel excluded from fashion." Younger Chinese women believed that the idealized model reinforced their perceived lesser beauty. A participant (19-25, C, 3-5), who was shown a Y, W, S model, remarked: "I feel sad. I think of how white models have made us believe that the world doesn't see us as beautiful." Some Chinese women expressed indignation rather than sorrow. A participant (26-35, C, 6-8), who was shown a Y, W, S model, said: "I rip out ads with white models from my magazines. We're not only allowing Western companies control our economy, we're allowing their ideas of beauty to control our minds."

To further support the role of perceived minority status, Caucasian women viewed the race of the model as irrelevant to their perceptions of models. They explained that seeing a Caucasian or black model did not change their ability to identify or self-enhance.

A participant (36-50, W, 3-5), shown a Y, B, S model, said: "The fact she's black doesn't stop me from picturing the dress on me and feeling gorgeous. I see another older woman. Her race doesn't factor into my comparison."

Moreover, the responses of some larger Americans revealed that they saw themselves as occupying minority status. They had favorable reactions to larger models because they believed that they could replicate their image; they believed this was unfeasible when they viewed thin models. A participant (26-35, W, 13-14), shown a Y, W, L model, remarked: "Where are the curvy models in fashion? I can't relate to her if she doesn't have booty like me." Larger Americans also had positive responses when they saw larger models because they felt included in fashion. Conversely, idealized models reinforced their feeling of marginalization from the fashion industry's idea of beauty. A participant (26-35, W, 9-12), shown a Y, W, S model, said: "I feel invisible when I only see skinny models in magazines. It's like the fashion industry's saying, 'you're too fat to be part of fashion.'"

Discussion

My study provides the first comparison of American and Chinese women's consumer response to models of different sizes, ages and races in fashion advertisements. While scholars assert that people's perceptions are aligned with their culture (Heine 2001), my findings suggest that this premise is not supported by empirical data in the context of fashion advertising. I conclude that women's responses to models are influenced by identity positions other than culture: age and perceived minority status. My results also elucidate the consumer values that explain why women prefer particular models versus others. I demonstrate that two values underpin their responses: perceptions of malleability and self-enhancing/self-improving motivations. While these findings are broadly consistent with past studies on advertising copy that have found people from one culture can possess both self-views (e.g., Aaker and Lee 2001), my study explicitly identifies the nature of, and the relationship between, individuals and self-construal within and between cultures. These results suggest two theoretical insights that illuminate cross-cultural psychology and marketing research.

First, my study suggests that belonging to a particular generation influences American and Chinese women's self-views. Younger women were more likely to self-improve and believe their bodies were malleable whereas older women were more likely to self-enhance and believe their looks were fixed. Similarly, I find that women's perceived minority status influences their values; when African-Americans, Chinese women and larger Americans perceived themselves as belonging to a group that was underrepresented in fashion,

they were more likely to believe their attributes were unchangeable and express self-enhancement. These findings suggest that perceptions of malleability and self-enhancement might not be only linked to one's cultural group but to one's generation and/or perceived minority status. While research has demonstrated that both self-views exist within a single culture (e.g., Zhang 2009), my study delineates the identity positions within a culture that comprise each self-construal.

Additionally, my findings indicate a nuanced relationship between an individual's age and perceived minority status. While some younger Chinese women communicated self-improvement, others—who viewed themselves as belonging to a minority group—expressed self-enhancement. Similarly, some younger, larger Americans expressed self-improvement whereas others conveyed self-enhancement because they identified as a minority. These results suggest that an individual's perception of minority status might outweigh their age at influencing their self-views. Furthermore, distinctiveness theory has concluded that a person's distinctive traits—those that they perceive to occupy minority status—are more salient to them than their common traits (Grier and Deshpande 2001). While this research stream has focused on American consumer response to ethnic models (e.g., Aaker, Brumbaugh and Grier 2000), my study suggests that younger Chinese and larger American women also perceive their race and size as distinctive; they subsequently increase favorable consumer responses to fashion models who reflect their distinctive traits. My research therefore suggests that distinctiveness might activate one's self-construal and consumer response.

Managerial Implications

My results indicate that fashion brands will fail to effectively motivate the diversity of their consumer segments should they employ a standardized global or regional advertising strategy. Instead, I advise marketers to localize models according to each targeted generational cohort and perceived minority group in order to maximize the impact of their advertising. This approach stresses the need for models to be tailored towards women's geographic (i.e., U.S. or China), demographic (i.e., age) and psychographic (i.e., perceived minority status) traits (Jackson and Shaw 2009).

In addition to informing the debate on advertising standardization, my results reveal two marketing insights. They suggest a shift in the conventional casting of models in American fashion advertising. While exclusively using idealized models may be considered the most effective strategy to attract consumers (Barry 2007), my study challenges the belief that all women favorably perceive these models. Many Americans expressed positive sentiments towards models who reflected their ages, sizes and—for black women—races over models who did not. Marketers should also be cautious when heeding my results in China. There is a group of young women who negatively perceive Western beauty; instead, they positively respond to Chinese models because they culturally identify and feel empowered. Marketers should note that rejection of Western beauty by some of these women reflected hostility towards the West. Such reaction is consistent with the “angry youth” movement where young Chinese nationalists denounce Western influence (Osno 2008). Since idealized Caucasian models represent an example of Western Imperialism (Johansson 1999), these young women may be part of this movement that could influence their peers' opinions and curtail Western advertising.

Future Research

Given that my study employed an exploratory qualitative approach, my results are only suggestive and require confirmation. I recommend that researchers conduct quantitative studies with a random, representative sample of women to confirm the validity of my results and establish their generalizability (May 2001). This study should test how generational cohort, perceived minority status, perceptions of malleability and motivations moderate the relationship between models and advertising effectiveness. A subsequent study could explore additional psychological processes undertaken when cross-cultural women view models; it could test the extent to which women make comparisons with models in accordance with the conditions discovered in my research (Richins 1991). I also encourage scholars to replicate my study with rural

populations. While my sample was restricted to urban women, studies find differences between urban and rural Chinese (Tao and Wu 2004) and American (Black 2005) consumer attitudes.

Researchers are invited to duplicate my study to determine if other qualitative methods uncover insights that remain undetected by focus groups. While focus groups illuminate attitudes by providing a group context, participants can influence one another. It is possible that the preference of younger women towards idealized models was influenced by their motivation to act in a socially desirable manner rather than reveal their individual feelings. I suggest that scholars conduct one-on-one interviews to identify individual preferences (Bloor et al. 2002).

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Buying and Selling ‘Britishness’: A discussion on how British brands use ‘Britishness’ as a marketing communication and positioning strategy to achieve iconic status

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Abstract

According to Kapferer’s brand identity prism theory, the DNA of a brand (and therefore its identity) can be established by a combination of the deliberate, planned and sustained activities internal to the brand (internalisation) and its external representation (externalisation) Kapferer (2009). To achieve this, brands have to be strategic and focused in the way they select the ‘storytelling’ aspects of the brand (communication) and the adoption of appropriate brand identifiers (positioning) Aaker(2005). One way of doing this is the use of icons as part of the marketing strategy.

This paper presents a discussion on how British brands use Britishness or other iconic British characteristics to achieve differentiation, create brand essence, brand personalities and thereby iconic status Kapferer (2009). The process can be two-way: a brand adopts an established icon and achieves iconic status or an icon adopts a brand thereby transferring their iconic credentials to the brand Okwonkwo (2008) This practise has included, but is not limited to, use of human and institutional icons such as Sherlock Holmes, Shakespeare, the British Royal Family, James Bond (007), British history and heritage. The report indicates how heritage can be used to achieve iconic status.

The study adopted a qualitative approach using a mixed method of non-participant observation, in-depth interviews and case study analysis of brands such as Alexander McQueen, Vivienne Westwood, Burberry, Libertys, Mulberry, Fortnum and Mason to explore the subject and draw conclusions. Content analysis was used to look for key themes and patterns within the observation, case studies and interviews. Gill and Johnson (2006)

The paper concludes that, in as much as an icon helps to market a brand, a brand can help to market an icon.

Buying and Selling ‘Britishness’

According to Kotler and Keller (2006), Marketing communications perform many functions for consumers and brands. Consumers can learn about who makes the products and how they are made. Companies can use communications to link brands to other people, places, events, experiences, feelings and things. Furthermore, marketing communications can contribute to create awareness of the brand; linking the right associations to the brand image in consumers’ memory; eliciting positive brand judgments or feelings; and/or facilitating a stronger consumer-brand connection. ‘Positioning is the act of designing the company’s offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target market’ Kotler and Keller (2006:310). The goal is to locate the brand in the mind of the consumer and maximise the potential benefit to the firm. A good brand positioning helps to clarify the brand essence, what goals it helps the consumer achieve and how it does so in a unique way. The result of positioning is the successful creation of a customer-focused-value proposition, a congenit reason why the target market should buy the product, Kotler and Keller (2006). Brands need to identify clearly what position they want to occupy in the mind of



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the consumers and communicate this in an effective and efficient manner. If a brand does this well, then consumers will not be confused.

This paper seeks to discuss how the three identified British brands have defined their value proposition in respect of their target customers, benefits and associations and use these to achieve differentiation and build and maintain their iconic status Kapferer (2008). The process seems to involve the brands concerned carefully and deliberately selecting to establish this through the extolling of all those iconic credentials available to them included, but not limited to, the use of culture, heritage, tradition and craftsmanship. The three brands selected for discussion in this paper are Burberry (a predominantly outerwear brand), The Harris Tweed (a distinctive and historic fabric) and Savile Row (an internationally renowned men's suit tailoring destination).

Burberry was founded by Thomas Burberry in 1856 in Basingstoke, Hampshire, England. The invention of the gabardine material in 1866 and creation of the modern day trench coat established the brand in the fashion world. Burberry's famous check is one of the most recognisable fashion brand symbol or logo. Burberry's brand image is characterised by the trench coat while its identity is associated with the check and British heritage. The brand's position has been established by creating a clear point of difference using a pyramid structure with Burberry primum at the high-end of its offering. Burberry's marketing strategy has been deliberate, incorporating marketing innovation, product excellence, intensifying non-apparel, accelerating retail growth and investing in under penetrated markets. The company has also embarked on an international expansion to leverage its business. Burberry (2012).

The Harris Tweed is a cloth that has been hand-woven by islanders at their homes in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. It is made from pure virgin wool dyed and spun. It is the world's only commercially produced hand-woven tweed. From start to finish the cloth is in the hands of skilled and experienced artisans who oversee every stage of production utilising generations of knowledge to produce a product worthy of the name Harris Tweed. Each piece of tweed is assigned a unique number which can be traced back to the individual home weaver. The Harris Tweed is the only fabric in the world protected by an Act of parliament. The passing of an Act of Parliament in 1993 brought into being The Harris Tweed Authority, a new statutory body replacing the original Harris Tweed Association set up in 1909. The authority oversees the production of the cloth from start to finish and only when satisfied that the article is genuine and deserving of the Orb will the cloth be branded as such. The mark of the Orb, pressed onto every length of cloth and seen on the traditional label affixed to finished items, guarantees the highest quality tweed. Harris Tweed Authority (2012) It is the fabric of choice for many of the world's leading designers as well as their most discerning clients.

Savile Row in London is the prestigious home to fine British tailoring. Located in Mayfair it lies adjacent to Regent Street. It is the destination for the most famous hand-made men's suits in British Fashion. The epitome of style and class, this privilege does not come cheap. It originated in the 1700's and began as a haven to military personnel and their wives during service. However as the 19th Century approached, the local gentry became ever more fascinated with the need for smart and stylish attire, causing an influx of tailors to Savile Row. The place is famous for kitting out such icons as Winston Churchill and Prince Charles. The term "bespoke" is believed to have originated in Savile Row when cloth for a suit was said to "be spoken for" by individual customers. Even though the number of operating tailors on Savile Row has now fallen tailoring houses in operation include the founding fathers and other new establishments. The Savile Row Bespoke Association unites the founding fathers of the row with the new establishment tailors to protect and develop a craft practiced in this elite quarter of Mayfair for over two centuries. Savile Row Bespoke Association (2012). These three iconic brands are key players in defining the British fashion industry.

Brands are an accepted part of our lives. They can transcend their products or services categories to become part of popular culture. In today's world brands are everywhere; a familiar part of daily lives for most people. But a few brands have set themselves apart. These brands have come to represent something more than a product or service. They are embedded in our culture and consciousness. They are icons. Iconic brands inspire an enduring affection that any marketer would want for his or her brand. Iconic brands are instantly recognisable; the shape of the Chanel logo is unique, Louis Vuitton monogram familiar, the

Burberry check easily identifiable in any landscape. A brand with such powerful visual clues has an intrinsic advantage over others, not least because it ensures that marketing communication (the storytelling aspects of the brand) and positioning is linked to the right brand attributes.

The term 'Britishness' tends to conjure up different associations and emotions in people. If asked 'what is "Britishness"?' on a much more general level, responses can range from, big ben, the Queen, David Beckham, Harry Porter, fish and chips, football hooliganism, Shakespeare, Sunday roast etc. British fashion, on the other hand is associated with traditions, culture, heritage, history, conservativeness, quintessential, elegance etc (sometimes a combination or all of these at the same time).

'The British traditional fashion style is characterized as conservative and ceremonial while from a modern perspective, it can be described as quintessential and elegant. Somehow, the rest of the world does not naturally ascribe the attributes of fashion creativity, sophistication, chic and art de vivre to Britain' Okonkwo (2007:310)

British fashion brands have specific and clear symbolic resources within their established history, which help the brands to be seen as more valuable. Consumers recognise the sentiment, inspiration and value of brand symbolism. British traditions, characterisations and, to some extent stereotyping are potent marketing messages for British fashion marketing domestically and globally. Because the market (domestic and global) has essentially a formed opinion and expectation of what is 'British', British brands can exploit this association and expectation to achieve their marketing goals. In his book 'How brands become icons', Oxford University Professor Douglass Holt, (2004) proposes three principles: Iconic brands address acute contradictions in society. By tapping into collective desire or anxiety, iconic brands develop a status that transcends functional benefits. They challenge people, either directly or subtly, to reconsider accepted thinking and behaviour. The famous Coca-Cola ad from 1971, "I'd like to teach the world to sing," voiced a desire to overcome the deep divisions in American society created by the Vietnam War. Iconic brands develop identity myths that address these desires and anxieties. By cresting imaginary worlds, they offer escape from everyday reality. The Marlboro man represents the values of Western frontiers: strong, independent and capable. Over time, the brand comes to embody the myth. It becomes a shorthand symbol that represents far more than just a brand or trench coat (Burberry), fabric (Harris Tweed) or destination of men's suiting (Savile Row). While there are many alternative brands to meet the needs satisfied by these three brands they still symbolise a specific status around the world. That is what makes them maintain their iconic status. Using the ideals of 'Britishness' these brands have sought to satisfy the three principles suggested by Holt (2004). They have used the key characteristics closely associated with Britishness to market and position themselves within the target market namely, present physical cues, functional benefits and evoked emotions that are more closely associated with Britain and Britishness. Additionally, these brands have structured themselves upon the basis of three fundamental components for iconic marketing: first, the identity component (signs of recognition); second, the perceptual component (cognitive associations and perceptions) and lastly, the trust component (confirmation of expectations). They have done this through the communicating of these representations clearly throughout their messaging, manufacturing processes and product portfolios.

'Some cultural baggage is therefore necessary to appreciate luxury. In fact the two individual factors that do most to explain the consumption rate of luxury products are firstly cultural capital, secondly income' Kapferer, (2008: 84)

Culture is the "lens" through which people view products. Ironically, the effects of culture on consumer behaviour are so powerful and far-reaching that this importance is sometimes difficult to grasp. Successful British luxury brands tend to indicate their strong brand culture. On a more general level other examples including such brands as Alice Temperly, Stella McCartney and Mulberry have also employed different methods of marketing communication and positioning strategies of their cultures with various successful outcomes. It can be argued that there could be other mitigating circumstances that may inform or influence consumer behavior other than culture, traditions, heritage and history. In order to inform the phenomenon of Britishness, this study referred to some previous studies undertaken regarding the country of origin (COO)

effect. It is believed that among the many factors believed to influence consumer brand knowledge and therefore brands success in an age of international competition is country-of-origin (COO). There have been many definitions of COO and its effect on consumer behaviour. It has been defined as the country where the corporate headquarters of the company marketing the product or brand is situated Johansson (1985) and Ozsomer and Cavusgil (1991); as the country of manufacture or assembly Papadopoulos (1993) Lee and Schaninger (1996); and as the country of product design. However this study identified that COO is most commonly associated with 'origins' of the brand in its true sense i.e. the geographical 'birth place' of the brand. That the brand is perceived in relation to this most of all before anything else; that the culture and history of its traditional birth place is far much more significant in building those expectations, associations and relationships with its consumers. 'A strong brand is one that has been able to create aficionados, eager and proselytizing clients.' Kapferer (2012:92). Brand culture creates a story to be able to have brand identity. However, brand identity is not established in a short period of time. It is built with history. Because history gives depth to a brand, timeless to its objects (Kapferer, 2012). Reference to past studies on COO helped to saturate the findings of this study in advancing the view that in this modern society, companies are investing in the brand's 'value' and 'identity' as much as they are investing in the product or service itself. The key point is how the products or services can bring the significant messages to the consumers, be it history or culture. Brands are symbols themselves that represent a character of goods. There are no longer consumed for merely functional satisfaction. The consumption has become meaningful value that is based on the brands identity. Symbolic resources are often used to support cultural meanings. British brands have an option to use COO as it relates to Britishness to achieve iconic status. Two key aspects of Britishness are British heritage and British culture. According to Visit Britain, 'The single most powerful marketing messages for attracting visitors to Britain is our culture and heritage' Visit Britain (2012). British heritage, tradition and culture affect fashion marketing. They can be a powerful message to create brand positioning and success. Not surprisingly both iconic British brands and those wishing to achieve iconic status use 'Britishness' to become successful. Iconic British brands tend to have their own identities, which relate to their brand culture and heritage irrespective of place of manufacture, assembly or corporate headquarters location.

The methodology to gather the discussion for this paper was done through a mixed method approach Gill and Johnson (2006). The study adopted a qualitative approach including primary research that involved undertaking a non-participant observation of brand activity. Other primary research techniques applied included in-depth interviews. The interview with a representative of Visit Britain, a leading non-governmental organisation (which is government funded) and charged with the responsibility of promoting Britain abroad, was undertaken in order to gain a much deeper understanding on motivation for visiting and associations with Britishness globally. Secondary research involved media evaluation, business journals, company websites, researching websites of pro-Britishness campaigners but was largely informed by case study analysis of the selected brands in order to draw conclusions. Careful selection was done to identify those brands that would meet the informed criteria of the definition of iconic status. Data analysis was done using the content analysis method to evaluate key themes and patterns within the gathered research so as to determine the paper outcomes.

The discussion suggests that Burberry is one British brand that has managed to channel the diverse image of Britain (an image that encompasses everything from punk rock to royalty) into a successful and focused brand attribute. The brand has continued to use the heritage Kapferer (2008) of the trench coat to achieve a specific positioning in the target market. The brand has even used British themed songs throughout the brands major campaigns on all available platforms to reinforce its British credentials. Britishness has informed the brands in-store, online, offline and social media platform designs. At the unveiling of the company AW12 collection, Christopher Bailey (Burberry's chief creative officer) stated that the use of British models, a British musical group and British themes was in line with the brands aspiration to project British culture and heritage. Equally the brand's international expansion has also not been spared when it comes to 'exporting' 'Britishness'. For example, the brand's launch activities in India maintained a strict British theme. It is clear that the brand has used a deliberate and planned marketing communication

and positioning strategy to use Britishness in its communications and positioning strategy to achieve and maintain success.

Another finding of this study is that Saville Row, famed for its bespoke tailors and made-to-measure suits, is another iconic British fashion destination that has continued to use its Britishness to effectively market itself. Its attributes are well known as a 'destination for an English Gentleman's suit'. It has reinforced this image consistently over the years and thus by so doing has meant that the original idea of 'tailor-made-English-suits' has remained. One typical example is Henry Poole, founded in the 1850/60s it is one of the founders of Savile Row. The archives at the company show records of travel of its tailors from as far back as the time before the aeroplane (with tailors travelling by steamers going to Japan and Russia) to service clients whose paintings and photographs bear evidence to the history, tradition and heritage of the company. The company has dressed 'anyone who's anybody, not just in Britain but internationally as well'. This is one company which is an embodiment of Savile Row. The company has relationships with some of its clients going well over 150 years. Despite the emergence of globalisation the company has sought to stick to its traditional principles in order to maintain integrity and prestige. The company does not regard making bespoke garments to suit international tastes as being 'authentic', rather they stick to English traditions. Speaking in an interview with an employee at Henry Poole (who opted to be anonymous), he said, 'If you look at Aston Martin, who's making a bespoke custom model with a Chinese dragon on it, you think "how stupid is that?" because the Chinese people want a Aston Martin, not a Chinese dragon, that's just stupid'. He goes on to say that Savile Row is entirely about customer's personalities. He confirms the principle of security and myth by stating that bespoke is about playing on ones insecurities, that you want to be part of a gang, or you want to belong to a certain group of people, you want to dress the way the people you admire dress, so you want to be a Henry Poole's customer. The customer is hoping that they are getting some of the characteristics of the personality of the individual tailors. This forms the bond. The expectation. The sharing of culture, tradition and history of the brand. He also confirmed that Savile Row tailors can make anything you want although they will hold back if they think it's of questionable taste, because unlike the big brands that have advertising budgets, Savile Row tailors do not, so the advertising really is the people that wear their suits. There are conscious not to let people walking out of the door looking terrible. Staying true to tradition, heritage and history has meant that Savile Row has maintained its iconic status. In recent years relatively 'New' tailors such as Oswald Boateng, Richard James, Timothy and Thom Sweeney have been introduced alongside the old established tailoring houses to continue what is perceived as British Tradition. The Henry Poole employee insists that they should be referred to as 'the new establishment' rather than new tailors. What is remarkable about these 'new generation establishment' tailors is that they have bought into the Savile Row ethos. The craft is 'traditional', but their style is progressive. 'They won't let guys walking out of the door looking old, because the last thing you want is a guy of 30 or 40 looking 60 years old'. British Tradition is till at the heart of all that Savile Row. This is what it is about. It is clear that the marketing communication and positioning that Savile Row adopts is deliberate, planned and sustainably intended to benefit from the 'Britishness' contexts in terms of tradition, heritage and culture. This has contributed to the continued success of this British icon. The establishment of the The Savile Row Bespoke Association which unites the founding fathers of the Row with the New Establishment tailors is intended to protect, preserve and develop a craft practiced in this elite quarter of Mayfair for over two centuries for a long time to come.

The Harris Tweed as a fabric is one that has been associated with British fashion and British manufacturing for a long time. It symbolises the best of British fabric and manufacturing. It has maintained its iconic status both in its manufacture and application. It is still hand-woven by the islanders on the island isles of Lewis and Harris, Uist and Barra in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland using local wool. Because it is hand woven, no two lengths of Harris Tweed are the same, and each bears the hallmark of the weaver that has made it. However, what each length of cloth has in common is its relation to the colours of the landscape and the hues of the sky of this part of the British Isles. There may be up to 20 colours in one design, and this is what makes Harris Tweed so special and iconic. It was a century ago that the Scottish textiles industry registered its trademark Orb stamp, and Harris Tweed has not changed much since. One of the

ways it positions itself is that, Clo Mor (The Big Cloth) is the only fabric in the world governed by its own Act of Parliament. It is also governed by an authority. The fundamental role of the organisation is to undertake responsibility for promoting and maintaining the authenticity, standard and reputation of the world famous Harris Tweed cloth. This way the iconic nature of the fabric is preserved. The history, traditions un-spoilt and heritage preserved..

'The Authority oversees the production and inspection of the cloth from start to finish and only when satisfied that the article is genuinely deserving of our historic Orb will we brand the cloth with the mark.' Harris Tweed Authority (2012)

Other ways in which the fabric has maintained its iconic status is through high profile promotional success such as use several Nike running shoe designs including the *Terminator*, *Blazer*, and *Air Force 1*. In 2009, British fashion designer Sara Bernman designed a capsule collection of limited edition Harris Tweed coats sold exclusively through her online boutique. In 2010, fashion label Thomas Pink contracted with Harris Tweed to produce a line of sport jackets for their AW10 season. Supreme has produced several items in Harris Tweed fabrics, including two hats and a coaches jacket from their Fall/Winter 2012 line. One of the largest order of Harris Tweed was delivered for the fit-out of the new five-star Hotel Glasgow, called Blythswood Square. Contemporary furniture manufacturers such as Blackhouse have started to produce modern furniture upholstered in a wide range of Harris Tweed designs. Refinished with a special Teflon coating which improves the stain repelling characteristics and durability of the original Harris Tweed cloth, this innovative use is a departure from the traditional utilisation of Harris Tweed cloth however, what has still been maintained, at all times is the history, heritage, tradition and culture of the fabric. The marketing of this iconic fashion brand represents yet another example of how a carefully selected communication and positioning strategy is required in order to, not only establish, but maintain iconic status.

The focus of this paper was to discuss how selected British icons are marketed. It can be argued that Britishness is being used to achieve iconic status. The paper sought to contribute to the discussion suggesting that culture, heritage, tradition, history and storytelling are an important and key aspect of marketing iconic brands. It also sought to discuss that the principles governing the marketing of icons should be deliberate and sustainable, consistent with the desired attributes of the brand. Marketers therefore need to learn that iconic brands have specific discerning aspects that need to be projected appropriately to achieve success and that a marketing communication and positioning strategy needs to clearly understand the 'communicable' and 'storytelling aspects' of the icon in order to bring out the best of responses within the target market. The marketing of icons need to exploit those aspects for which members of the target audience would find most appealing or those for which they would most find representative of the brand they wish to purchase. It concludes that the representative factor of the icon is very important. That consumers predisposed to the iconic brand either directly or by association will have a pre-determined expectation of what the brand represents in terms of the benefits to be sought and as such the iconic brand should then seek to most exploit what its representative properties and qualities in the mind of its target market. The paper also sought to discuss that country of origin has got a great impact on consumer behaviour and brand positioning rather than other consideration place of manufacture, location of head of or design. Therefore a brand has to create a strong enough brand association with brand name to such an extent that other peripheral matters such as place of manufacture, location of head office and distribution would not have such a detrimental effect on the brands success if knowledge of its origin, culture, identity and history are clearly established in the target audience. Iconic marketing is therefore about preservation of the identifiable credentials of the icon and consequently the presentation of these to the target audience in the most effective and representative manner.

* Summary of key findings and discussions; the three brands discussed evidenced the common concept of brand identity that is 'Britishness' and prove how significantly valuable this is in maintaining their iconic status. They represent different aspects of 'Britishness' (British Fashion). Burberry is British heritage and lifestyle luxury (Incorporating British Elegance and style). The Harris Tweed represents inspiration of country image, history and tradition. Savile Row is quintessentially British culture, history and tradition. All three brands have strong cultural roots that tap into society values, sometimes even inspiring a shift in

those values. They possess physical symbolic features that make them instantly recognisable. They have a compelling story and manage to remain true to their original values while reinterpreting them in light of contemporary culture.

* These features are key in their efforts to maintain iconic status in the future.

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Barbie, the Fashion Icon of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

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Ms. Priti Gadhavi has attended workshop on Intellectual Property Rights conducted by World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in the year 2008 and 2009 at NIFT campus New Delhi. Her area of interest lies in subjects like Marketing, Brand Management, Consumer Behavior, and Intellectual Property Rights.

Abstract

I am 50+ still young and sexy!!! Barbie, the fashion Doll, with worldwide presence, entered Indian market in 1982. Mattel Toys, the global leaders in the toy industry was the pioneer to sense the need of a doll which was first made by Ruth and Elliot Handler who identified a gap for a doll with a more youthful appearance that could appeal the adolescent girls, made the first doll in 1959. Since then Barbie has become a fashion icon for this age group and perhaps many others.

It is surprising to find that even in India, which is a developing nation, typically characterized by grave income inequalities; this fashion icon has made a profound impact and is here to stay. This indicates that marketers have identified huge market potential in India and hence have customized their lines of merchandise according to the culture and preferences of Indian consumers. Thus Barbie has been a fashion icon and is gaining even more fanfare as it embodies a role model for future aspirations among young Indian girls.

This paper studies the various merchandise for girls like dolls, apparels, stationary items, footwear, and watches among many others, inspired by Barbie. A primary survey will be conducted on young Indian girls as consumers with the objective to analyze the factors that cause inclination towards the Barbie Doll and the influence that this icon carries on buying preference of young girls. The study proposes to bring forth the reasons and level of acceptance of Barbie doll among different age groups of young Indian girls.

Introduction

"I was a big Barbie doll kid, and every Christmas I got a new Barbie"(US First Lady Michelle Obama during her family vacation to Hawaii talked with American children on conference call to help children track Santa on 25th December 2012, Tuesday)

For more than fifty years the Barbie Doll leads the toy market, with 12 % increase in worldwide gross sales, 8% increase in domestic and 14% increase in international gross sales in the year 2011, the brand maintained to remain the same strong core brand of the Mattel Inc. (Mattel Annual Report 2011)and is the most valuable toy brand in the world. The doll was introduced in 1959 in the United States of America by leading American toy manufacturing company Mattel and since then Barbie has relished worldwide fame and acceptance. Initially the doll was targeted to the young girls from the age of three and above but it is still favorite among all teen age-groups. Barbie doll was one of the first toys which was broadcasted through television advertising as a part of the promotion strategy in the initial years; the same was adopted by other toy makers later. In the 1980s era Mattel had realized a change in female attitude and had made an effort to convey the changing role of women from being homemaker to opting for different career options for herself, consequently it launched different versions of Barbie dolls like teacher, engineer, doctor, astronaut to name a few, which gave wings to Barbie collections among young girls. Various studies reveal that average girl aged between three and eleven in the United States owns ten Barbie dolls, in Britain or Italy it is seven and in France or Germany the number is five, and is the most preferred toy brand in the world (The Economist 2002, Burns P. 2011). One can do anything with a Barbie doll from dressing her up to grooming, to bending and to playing, which turns out to be the magnet for the young girls. She is not a new attraction; she has ruled the market for many years. In today's scenario one can find families where a grandmother, mother and granddaughter choose a Barbie doll together at a shopping mall, as the grandmother and mother had played with Barbie in their childhood. The craze about the doll is getting stronger day by day

with every passing generation. As a part of their hobby or simply keeping them engaged, girls increasingly desire, purchase and collect Barbie dolls.

Barbie has been a favorite toy for young girls for more than half century and has gone through numerous controversies. Mattel got itself into trouble several times, be it the “Teen Talk Barbie” speaking a number of phrases including “Math class is tough!”, misleading children as studying Mathematics is hard or be it Barbie’s body proportions as a cultural icon of female beauty, have received ample criticism which mislead girls who attempt to emulate her will become anorexic. Empirical studies confirm that Barbie’s body proportions are unrealistic, unattainable, and unhealthy (Brownell, 1991). Though Barbie, the character has undergone various controversies, this paper focuses on the other side; the popularity of the character.

Children today signify an important and lucrative demographic segment to the marketers. Marketers put their best to find out the most effective techniques to reach and convince the little minds to urge for their offered products or brands. The child market refers to the group of children between the ages of five and thirteen, roughly the elementary school age children who make purchases of goods and services for personal use and satisfaction (McNeal, 1999). For around four decades various researches have accumulated in quest of identifying different influencing factors especially to children which results into the business for marketers. Research related to children advertising (Aukenand Lonial 1984, Gunter and Furnham 1998), television advertising intent (Roedder John 1999a, Lawlor and Prothero 2004), spokes characters (Garretson and Niedrich 2004) reveal that the company targeting children as consumer should understand the age, characteristics, tastes, preferences, and traits thoroughly before communicating with them via any medium of advertising.

About Barbie

The Barbie Doll reaches girls in four different continents and more than 12 countries (Sharma, 2008). Mattel Toys, the global leaders in the toy industry was the pioneer to sense the need of a global market for the doll that was first created by Ruth and Elliot Handler (Exhibit 1, Annexure 1) in 1959. The couple was inspired by the German doll Bild Lilli- an adult doll not for children. They saw the Lilli doll (Exhibit 2, Annexure 1) in Switzerland during their trip to Europe and felt it was the same type of doll which Handler had in mind. Ruth had observed her daughter playing with paper dolls, and noticed that she being a child often enjoyed giving her paper dolls the adult roles and imagine their lives as adults while playing; both Ruth and Elliot realized a gap in the market (Lord 1995). With splendid collaboration the couple managed their tasks, like Elliot concentrated on creation and production supervision of toys where Ruth contributed more towards its marketing and finance issues, along with customer concerns. Barbie, the name is derived from Ruth’s Daughter Barbara who shares the same birth date with Barbie which is 9th March.

Initially in 1945 the company ventured out in wood products and rapidly had pronged out into toys. Mattel sold wooden and musical toys primarily; however with the introduction of Barbie along with other popular product lines the company started flourishing in the toy market with wide consumer base worldwide. The first Barbie doll was introduced in a black and white zebra striped bathing suit, with a ponytail hairstyle, sunglasses, earrings, and open toes shoes, having the demure sideways glance (Exhibit 3, Annexure 2), it was shown in New York Toy Fair in the year 1959. The original Barbie was sold for \$ 3 initially with its fashion accessories sold separately from \$1 to \$5. Mattel has been continuously making enormous efforts to change Barbie’s appearance to appeal the young girls, most remarkably in 1971 when it adjusted the doll’s eyes to look forwards rather than sideways glance of the original model. This was the major change in Barbie’s appearance; there has not been much significant change in size and shape of Barbie in her life.

Barbie doll, the fashion icon and an inspiration for young girls is available in wide varieties in more than 150 countries, the company has developed range of Barbies with more than 125 careers (Exhibit 5, Annexure 3) and has depicted around 50 different nationalities keeping in mind the cultures and values different nations. The company has identified role of women with different career opportunities women look forward in their life, and developed dolls in almost every imaginable professions. Barbie has gained her reputation as number one selling doll globally.

Barbie varieties

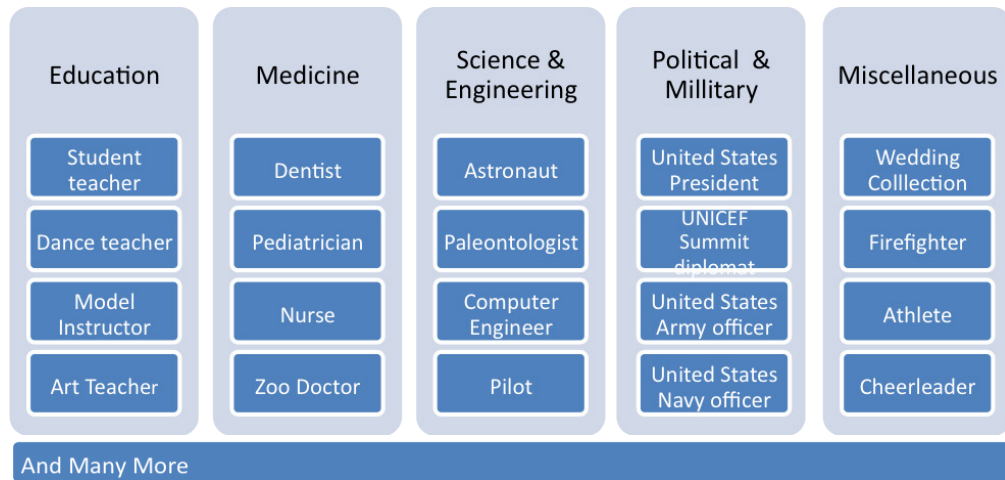


Figure 1: Barbie Varieties available across the globe

For Barbie's creation, over 100 designers, seamstresses, pattern makers, and stylists are involved in the production of Barbie outfit and look. In the last fifty years, over 105 million yards of fabric have gone into designing over 1 billion fashion items for Barbie and her friends (Forbes'09). To add more excitement about the doll and make her family alive, Mattel introduced Barbie's Siblings named Skipper, Kelly, Krissy, Stacie, Todd, etc. also her Boyfriend named Ken.

Barbie the flagship brand of Mattel Inc. was initially positioned as a fashion doll for young girls and continues the same image till date (Retail Merchandiser, 2011). Barbie inhabits the young girls' minds not by a coincidence; Mattel devotes a lot of efforts to position Barbie not just as an ordinary doll but a fashion icon while consciously endorsing "Barbie as a lifestyle not just a toy." Mattel claims that more than a billion Barbie dolls have been sold all over the world. Every half-second, somewhere in the world another Barbie is sold, with increasingly younger girls being targeted (Schor, 2004). As a part of Barbie's fame there are more than 300 Facebook pages, and more than 1,000 YouTube Channels in her honor, and more than 74.5 million Google searches, Mattel owns the bragging rights to the world's most famous toys. As of April 2010, Mattel posted a profit of \$24.8 million (\$.07 per share) with sales in the sum of \$880.1 million (L.A. TIMES, Apr. 17, 2010).

Barbie in Indian consumer market

Indian Demographics

According to UNICEF demographics 2011, India is the youngest country in the world. India being the second most populated country in the world enjoys large amount of young population. About 20 per cent of the global population under 25 years of age lives in India. Children under 14 years account for 29.7 per cent of the total population. The structure of families preferred is more of joint families since ages. With the advancement, urbanization and economic growth, India has observed a disintegration of traditional joint family into nuclear families; nevertheless the children remain the center of attraction as earlier. There is a slight decline in the average number of children per family compared to past with a significant rise in the earnings in the families. With the increase illiteracy rate, dual earning couple, late motherhood, and many, Indian families have more disposable income to spend and children being the main focus; parents try their best to fulfill their demands. The tremendous growth of gross domestic product and the organized retail trade in India entices both national and international brands of any kind from toys to apparels to accessories to stationary items for children, and sense further chances of progression for high priced merchandise. Kids Trends In India 2009 Apparel Report By Insight In store affirm that there is remarkable difference between urban and rural children in India with respect to their lifestyle, ambitions, cultures, set values, drive to learn & sensitivity to causes, mental markups, etc. and urban children will demand for different products

than that of their rural counterparts. Urban kids in India are no longer very different from their global counterparts in terms of their lifestyle, needs & demands, and preferences. Exploring the characteristics of urban children they are highly influenced by the western cultures, page 3 culture, the degree of influence may vary from child age, personality, peer group pressure, parental control and exposure to fashion trends on TV and internet media, which reflects in overall personality of the child. In this paper the researcher has taken up urban children- especially the young girls as sample and research results are limited up to it.

Barbie in India

Barbie the iconic American doll was launched in India in the year of 1982. In India Barbie doll is available in regular western attire like gowns, skirts, tops, and trousers along with series of Indian traditional attire in assorted colors like red, yellow, and green and golden (Exhibit 4, Annexure 3). The doll wears matching blouse with beautiful and graceful accessories like ring, earring, 'bindi', necklace, bangles and matching footwear. In the year 1998 Mattel Toys tried to localize the doll by creating an Indian Barbie doll available indifferent retail destinations of the country. Mattel has approximately Rs. 300 crore turnovers under brands like Barbie, Fisher-Price and Hotwheels and has gained leadership position in India. The Brand awareness of Barbie is 98 per cent globally and 93 per cent in India (The Hindu Business Line 2004). Barbie's success in India could be seen due to the growth of organized retail which makes the doll become more venerable, accessible and available.

Barbie more than a doll

Barbie, as a toy doll was and is accepted by wide number of girls all over the world; even Barbie as a character is also demonstrated in various cartoons or animated movies like the Nutcracker, which has ample spectators. Young girls enjoy playing with their Barbie Doll, no matter what the age is. Girls get emotionally attached to their Barbie and goes into their imaginary world and starts treating her as their siblings or best friend. Playing with their doll become the routine activities of this age girls, which also helps them to learn the mannerism of fashion with updates of current trends resulting in building up a decent personality. Such emotional bonding with the character results in to the longing for collecting range of merchandise with Barbie image like apparels, accessories, stationary items. With this in mind Mattel opened its first Barbie concept store in Mumbai through a tie up with Pantaloons Retail India Limited. For which Mattel provided the concept and expertise whereas Pantaloons provided the infrastructure (Business line 2004). In total there are eleven Mattel owned Barbie stores in different cities of India with wide range of licensed merchandise with Barbie signature. Mumbai city has maximum five Barbie stores (Exhibit 8, Annexure 5). Moreover, there are more than 500 retail destinations where Barbie doll with range of doll clothing and accessories, along with licensed products for personal use of girls with Barbie image on it are available. Globally, Mattel's licensing business includes products such as toys, accessories, clothing and stationery. The character image is also used in different merchandise and available for sale. The marketers of such merchandise promote them extensively and collections of such goods have become a craze all over the world among the young girls. In India the biggest licensee of Mattel for producing Barbie apparels for girls and Hot Wheels apparels for boys is the Shirt Company private limited.

Children as Consumer

Various researchers conclude that today's children are more participative in family purchase decisions than earlier. Study by Strasburger in 1999 reveals behavior of a child is shaped by imitating role models; their role models could be their parents, teachers, peers, siblings, also by cartoon characters they watch on Television. Same was supported by Stoneman and Broby in 1981, Gorn and Goldberg in 1982 and Borzekowski and Robinson 2001 and concluded that children who are exposed to TV commercials are more likely to pester their parents to buy the advertised items. With the rapid growth in television channels and online sites access via mobile phones, iPods and other digital devices the marketing and advertising companies successfully reaches the children as they are the heavy media users and can be convinced to buy the

advertised goods easily. Repetition of such advertisements over and over results into likelihood of purchasing and using products advertised. At the same time when media influences the children, their peer groups and parents also play an important role in young children's life. Today's generation has been brought up watching fashion related TV shows, movies, emaciated stars in fashionable attire, which is supported by their peers who follows the current trends for their desired products. Parents also want their children to use branded fashionable products and want them to live in fashion. Today's Parents provide huge allowances or pocket money to their young children, pamper them by getting demanded products easily, and encourage them to express their views about family purchases with positive responses (Soni and Upadhyay, 2007).

Marketing Mix of Barbie

Philip Kotler the renowned author of the book on principles of Marketing Management explains that the consumers stand in the center, and if the company wants to create his customer value and achieve profitable relationships, it has to decide upon which customer to serve through segmentation and targeting and how to serve them through differentiation and positioning. And with these marketing strategies company decides an integrated marketing mix also called as four P's marketing – Product, Price, Place, Promotion. Mattel has expanded its market and it operates through two business segments domestic and international. Domestic segment it develops and markets its products in the Unites States of America, and its international segment comprises of various retailers and wholesalers of Latin America, Europe, Australia, Canada, New Zeland, and Asia. For the brand Barbie in India Mattel targets the upper middle class, educated, working parents who are fashion conscious and who want their kids especially girls to play with Barbie Doll, and make their best efforts for their girls to look smart and fashionable by purchasing Barbie signature clothes.

Marketing mix for Barbie in India

Product: Main product the Barbie doll along with clothing and accessories and other merchandise for girls

Price: Doll for Rs. 300 to Rs. 2000 (~ 6-40 USD) and above, other merchandise for Rs. 349 to Rs. 4000 (~ 7-80 USD) and above

Place: Barbie doll is available in retail toy shops across India, it is also available online. There are in total eleven Barbie stores available across India in cities like Delhi, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Pune, Lucknow, Indore and five stores in Mumbai.

Promotion: Mattel uses Television media, social networking websites and print media for promotion of Barbie Doll and Barbie signature merchandise. The company used unique promotion style to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Barbie in India. They endorsed famous Bollywood actress Katrina Kaif as a brand ambassador. She was dressed up like Barbie Doll to get conspicuous attention for the brand; she also unveiled the new Barbie collection in Lakme Fashion week at Mumbai in the year 2009. In 2011 company launched 'I can be a movie star' range Barbie doll inspired by the actress with a message that anything is possible with Barbie doll, meaning if anyone dreams to be an actress, she can fulfill it. (Exhibit 6, Annexure 3).

Research Methodology

In total 25 young girls aged eight to twelve participated in research interviews. The research was conducted through semi structured interview in the month of November –December 2012 in three schools of Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India. The researcher interviewed girls who owned at least one Barbie doll and is influenced by the character. Each of the participants was approached independently by the researcher to take part in interview and confidentiality was assured. The interviews were conducted in school premises with due permission from the school authority. The researcher concurs with the view of Ruyter and Scholl's (1998) observation that qualitative research is undertaken by studying small samples, as was the case in this study. This qualitative study may be treated as the pilot study of the main research. The emphasis is to identify factors that help in deriving reasons for inclination towards Barbie doll and related products. The analysis progressed through repetitively dissecting the transcripts, identifying keywords; assigning

key words to paperclips, organize and re organize paper clips, explore connections between key words, and determine the outcomes.

Analysis

Barbie as a Character: Several studies by Callcott and Lee(1994), Phillips (1996) consider any non-human characters used to promote a product or brand are called spokes character; these characters are used in promotional campaigns in abundance. The researcher would like to highlight that Barbie doll a non-human character used for promotional campaign by the company Mattel Corporation may also be called the spokes character used for strengthening the brand. Callcott and Phillips (1996) had identified factors – personality, physical characteristics, humour and consumer experience which make the spokes character more likable. David Aaker (1993) and Biel (1992) have mentioned that companies use spokes character’s personality which is reflected by the way they dress up, they groom up. Callcott and Phillips (1996) mentioned that physical characteristics of any spokes character are very important in getting consumer’s attention. Physical characteristics may be defined as shape, miniature props, and contemporary appearance of the spokes character. The contemporary appearance and modern dress is more attention seeker aspects. Walker and Dubitsky(1994) mentioned that humour factors like cute, humorous, convincing/effective, clever/imaginative, believable/realistic and appealing. Consumer experience factor of liking include consumer’s prior experiences about a character, its brand name, cultural association of the character resulting into a positive or negative association with a brand.

Spokes character likable factors

<p>Personality :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dressing style • Grooming style • Overall fame 	<p>Physical characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shape • Body Figure • Props • Contemporary Appearance
<p>Humour :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cute • Humorous, • Convincing/effective • Clever/imaginative • Believable/realistic • Appealing 	<p>Consumer Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer’s prior experiences about a character, • Brand name, • Cultural association of the character <p>resulting into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive • Negative association with a character.

Figure 2: likability factors

To find out reasons and level of acceptance of Barbie doll, four likeability factors of spokes character likeability mentioned in figure 2 were undertaken in the data. The scope and consequences are discussed below:

Personality: on being asked why they like the Barbie doll, the replies were as below:

“I like my Barbie because she is pretty” by 9 year old Ankita

“Oh!! She is so stylist and adorable” by 12 year old Saumya

“I like Barbie because of her lifestyle, she has the best house, so many pets, best clothes and makeup”, by 12 year old Drishti

“Barbie is very famous, I went to Singapore and UK, it was available everywhere, so I want to be famous like her”, by 10 year old Frena

The personality traits derived were fashion and style, beauty and fame, lifestyle. These results support study of Callcott and Phillips (1996)that strong brand character leads to strong brand personality and further develops the desired brand equity.

Physical characteristics: on being asked what attracts you the most from the character (Barbie), replies were:

“Barbie is so tall and sexy!!!” by 10 year old Frena

“My mom says I should be like her, I have a doctor Barbie” by 11 year old Aditi

“My mother prefers pink and purple colors, so she allows me to buy Barbie colored t-shirts and hair clips” by 12 year old Ashna

The physical characteristics derived are the shape, figure, the career, the colors, grooming and the lifestyle.

Humour: on being asked how you define your Barbie, replies were:

“She is smart and intelligent” by 10 year old Eva

“My Barbie doll is my best friend” by 9 year old Yana

“I share my joy and sorrow with my Barbie!!!” by 11 year old Sonu

“She is a great listener, she never argue with me” by 10 year old Smriti

These indicate that girls in India relate humorous traits about Barbie are: smart, intelligent, best friend, listener, sense of belongingness, and sense of security.

Consumer experience: on asking question like how do you identify yourself with Barbie? replies were:

“I don’t like Barbie in Saari, she looks more pretty in skirts and tops”, by 11 year old Parin

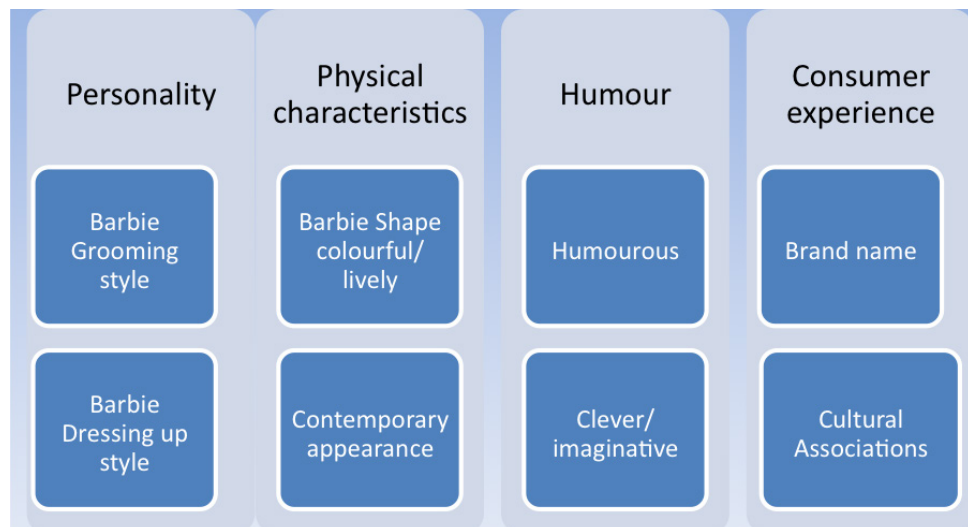
“I have a princess Barbie and my name is Princy too” by 10 year old Princy

“My Barbie is fashionable so as I” by 12 year old Supriya

I have one old Barbie which my mom gifted me, actually it is my mom’s doll, she was playing with her when she was small by 10 year old Smriti

These describe that young girls in India value the culture and tradition and relate themselves with the doll.

Barbie Likeable factors



Hence one can conclude that the above factors lead to a positive association with the brand Barbie and this positive association leads to the demand of a range of merchandise associated with the Barbie image/icon.

Moreover, following outcomes also supports young girl’s inclination towards Barbie:

- ❖ On an average every girls had minimum two Barbie dolls.
- ❖ Most of the respondents had different products inspired by Barbie; most common products were:

- Stationary items – pencils, erasers, water bottle, compass box, and school bags.
 - Apparels: majority of respondents have t-shirts and Capris
 - Accessories: majority of girls have hair accessories like hair clips, ribbons, hair bands with Barbie, many of them have belts, umbrellas too.
- ❖ Majority (89%) replied that their parents get them all these products, sometimes their grandparents both paternal and maternal get them too. The significant replies were:
- *“I never have to nag for Barbie doll; my parents only get me Barbie”, by 9 year old Tanya*
 - *“I have ten Barbie because my parents gift me one Barbie every time on my birthday” by 10 Year old Princy*
 - *“If my parents do not get me products with Barbie image, I tell my MAMA (maternal uncle) and he never say no to me” by 11 year old Nakiya*
- ❖ On asking question relation to price of product all respondents replied that when they see any product with Barbie image they simply urge for it, prices are seen by parents.
- ❖ On asking up to what age you will play with your Barbie, replies were:
- *“I just love my Barbie, My papa told me that when I was born he brought many toys and Barbie doll was one of them, I will keep it till I am alive” by 8 year old Rhiyana*
 - *“As I grow I will give my Barbie to my cousins”, by 12 year old Suhashini*
 - *“My mumma said that you should play with your Barbie doll till 12 years, after thirteen girls should stop playing with a doll”, by 10 year old Moksha*
 - *“I have little sister, she will play with my Barbie”, by 10 year old Jheel*
 - *“I can not share my Barbie with anyone, its mine only!!!” by 9 year old Tashu*

The above replies affirm that Indian young girls are emotionally attached to their Barbie doll; the craze about Barbie doll in India has been witnessed herewith.

Findings

Most of the respondent had minimum two Barbie dolls in their collection, they replied that they got their first Barbie at an age of 2 years and above, these dolls are gifted by parents or grandparents (paternal and maternal). They wish to have every product with Barbie image. Barbie pink and purple colors attract them a lot; they feel sense of femininity with these color. The likability factors lead to a positive association with the brand Barbie which leads to the demand of a range of merchandise with the Barbie image/ icon. It is surprising to note that out of 25 respondents none of the girl talked more about Indian Barbie rather on asking none of them were keen to have a doll in Indian traditional attire. They all preferred Barbie in western outfits.

Conclusion

Barbie the non-human character or just a plastic body object well dressed up and well groomed up has been successful in getting remarkable place in the mindset of young girls across the globe. It is surprising to find that even in India, which is a developing nation, typically characterized by grave income inequalities, this fashion icon has made a profound impact and she is here to stay. On the other side Mattel is also making remarkable efforts to penetrate and grow in the Indian markets. The current study concludes that young Indian girls are emotionally attached with the fashion icon Barbie. Most of the interviewees reported playing imaginatively with their Barbie Dolls during childhood; they relate Barbie Doll as their best friend. The doll is accepted not only as a toy but as a character and any merchandise with Barbie image finds greater acceptance. This indicates that marketers have identified huge market potential in India and hence have customized their lines of merchandise according to the preference of Indian consumers especially keeping

in mind their favorite toy/animated characters. A great deal of desirability of the doll is due to the major factors like the aspiring looks, confidence and perfection. Barbie's iconic personality is going to last forever, thus Barbie was, Barbie is and Barbie will be one of the favorite toys of young Indian girls because she was, she is, and she will be "a way to express one's own self".

Limitations

The present findings and conclusions are limited given the small sample size. However, the essential part of the paper offers candid glimpse of young girls' view about Barbie as a Doll and as a character. The results suggest that that Barbie is a great fashion icon and is gaining even more fanfare as it embodies a role model for future aspirations among young Indian girls

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The Conical Corset and its Ongoing Consumption

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Abstract:

This paper discusses the impact of the cone-shaped corset designed by the French fashion designer Jean Paul Gaultier (1952) for pop artist Madonna's (1958) "Blonde Ambition" world tour in 1990. After Madonna's performance the corset became a garment of much controversy and discussion.¹ What is more, the corset is even (in)famous today within a generation which was born after the "Blonde Ambition" world tour. This paper starts by mapping the elements that led to the iconization of the corset during the world tour. Subsequently, it discusses how derived ensembles of Madonna's cone-shaped corset have been consumed ever since. This continuing consumption of the corset's concept is divided into three categories: first, there is the consumption by Gaultier - the designer of the original conical corset. Secondly, many outspoken pop artists, such as Lady Gaga, Rihanna and Katy Perry, have been spotted wearing either almost identical copies of the conical corset, or different kinds of corsets/brassieres that have similar characteristics to the original conical corset. The third consumption process is characterized by the creation of irony, such as the KPN add which can be seen in bus shelters with an older, and slightly overweight, Madonna look-a-like; or the performance of a two-year-old girl in *Toddlers and Tiaras* in a golden conical corset which, except for the colour, shares many physical characteristics with the peach coloured corset in question.² After mapping these activities, that imply the continuation of the concept of Madonna's cone-shaped corset, an attempt to understand in which ways the corset's design has been repeated/copied over the years will be made by using two antithetical theories: Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) and Max Horkheimer's (1895-1973) concept of the *culture industry* versus Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) and Félix Guattari's (1930-1992) concept of the *rhizome*.

The Conical Corset: Madonna & Gaultier, Deleuze & Guattari, Adorno & Horkheimer

Pop artist Madonna (1958) has worn the designs of couturier Jean Paul Gaultier (1952) many times, but arguably the most famous and memorable occasion of Madonna wearing Gaultier is during her "Blonde Ambition" world tour in 1990.³ In an interview with the *New York Times* Gaultier stated that he thought his assistant was joking when she told him Madonna called and asked whether he would like to design the costumes for her tour.⁴ He went on to say that Madonna's briefing was very clear: "She knew what she wanted -- a pinstripe suit, the feminine corsetry".⁵ After this briefing Gaultier presented more than 1,500 sketches to Madonna, wherefrom Madonna chose the final costumes, including the peach coloured conical corset.⁶

While examining Madonna's briefing, Gaultier's sketches and the events of Madonna wearing the corset, it can be said that Madonna received exactly what she asked Gaultier to design: a pinstriped suit and a feminine corset. At first glance, these two items could be contemplated as representing the classical and traditional items from the male and female wardrobe. Combining them was not especially shocking in 1990 as, for instance, Yves Saint Laurent and Giorgio Armani had been doing this for years.⁷ Neither were

1 Muir cited by: Schultz 1999, p. 41; Koda 2001, p. 60.

2 YOUTUBE a.

3 Madonna wore Gaultier's designs numerous times, which were often considered as "shocking", e.g. she went topless during Gaultier's fashion show in 1992 (YOUTUBE a), and Gaultier designed all the costumes for her "Drowned" world tour in 2001 (Hirschberg 2001, p. 13).

4 Hirschberg 2001, p. 13.

5 Hirschberg 2001, p. 13.

6 BLOND AMBITION WORLD TOUR 90.

7 Lipovetsky 2002, pp. 92-102.

Keywords: Theoretical Framework, Culture Industry, Rhizome, Deleuze, Guattari, Adorno, Horkheimer, Madonna, Lady Gaga, Toddlers, Tiaras

the cone-shaped cups epoch-making since they had been first introduced back in the 1950s, and Gaultier had already applied more extreme ones in his 1984 collections.⁸ Nevertheless, the corset was regarded a shocking object and was the subject of significant media attention during the 1990s.⁹ While it has been more than twenty years the corset is still (in)famous today for a generation that was born after the Blond Ambition tour where the cone-shaped corset was first presented. How did the cone-shaped corset become famous in the 1990s, and, more importantly, how is it still famous today?

One explanation could be the continuing consumption of the cone-shaped corset's concept. Lady Gaga, Rihanna, Katy Perry and Kylie Minogue have all three appropriated the design of the cone-shaped corset. Apart from having been used by these pop artists, the cone-shaped corset has also been used for other ends, such as an advertisement poster for the Dutch telecommunication company KPN, and during a performance of a two-year-old "beauty queen" in an episode of the series "Toddlers and Tiaras".

These occurrences may show the currency of the cone-shaped corset, but they do not explain *why* the cone-shaped corset remains a famous icon, and, moreover, why its derived shapes are still applied by other pop artists and commercial enterprises today. Explanations may be found by applying the concepts of two extremely antithetical theories: Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) and Max Horkheimer's (1895-1973) concept of the *culture industry*, on the one hand; and Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) and Félix Guattari's (1930-1992) concept of the *rhizome*, on the other hand.

Adorno and Horkheimer were German "social philosophers" who were closely tied to the "The Frankfurt School".¹⁰ This movement emerged out of a group of German intellectuals associated with the Institute for Social Research at the University of Frankfurt.¹¹ The institute was famous for its critical mix between Marxism and psychoanalysis.¹² A theory influenced by Marxism and psychoanalysis could not be further from the theory of the French philosopher Deleuze and his colleague Guattari as they voiced fierce criticism towards both aspects in their joint writing.¹³

Adorno and Horkheimer coined the concept of *culture industry* in their book *Dialectic of Enlightenment* by using it as a synonym for mass culture.¹⁴ In *Resume über Kulturindustrie* Adorno explains that this charged notion, mainly the use of the word *industry*, should emphasize the fact that mass culture had become an *organized production* with the goal to *sell culture*.¹⁵ In other words: culture does not arise spontaneously anymore; it is regulated within society. According to Adorno, this regulation leads to "a circle of manipulation and retroactive need in which the unity of the system grows ever stronger".¹⁶ He states that products or objects that are produced within the *culture industry* sustain hidden messages - predictable scripts - which can easily be decoded.¹⁷ Can the cone-shaped corset, and the continuing consumption of the derived forms of this corset, be understood as a part of the regulation process apparent within the *culture industry*? If so, what is the hidden message or script, and how is this message applied today?

Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the *rhizome* could offer a contrastive view on the fame and everlasting popularity of the cone-shaped corset. In 1976 Deleuze and Guattari wrote *Rhizome*, which was meant to be the introduction for their book *Mille Plateau*, but instead became the theoretical framing of their philosophy.¹⁸ The concept of *rhizome* offers a way of thinking that goes beyond the borders of the traditional and rational approaches apparent within philosophy. It is an unsystematic, non-hierarchical way of thinking that does not look at objects, places and people as "fixed entities" but as *never-ending* and *unpredictable*

8 Doyle 1997, p. 205.

9 Muir cited by: Schultz 1999, p. 41; Koda 2001, p. 60.

10 Storey 2007, p. 62.

11 Storey 2007, p. 62.

12 Storey 2007, p. 62.

13 Deleuze 2004, p. 35.

14 Velimirovic 2008, p. 315.

15 Velimirovic 2008, p. 315.

16 Adorno cited in: Storey 2007, p. 62.

17 Adorno 1991, p. 143.

18 Sanders preface in: Deleuze 2004, p. 7.

maps: a viewpoint completely contrary to that of Adorno and Horkheimer.¹⁹ What is there to be gained by viewing the cone-shaped corset as a part of an underlying and ongoing rhizomatic process? And, how does it manage to escape from, or overrule, the all absorbing *culture industry* described by Adorno?

When a one-of-a-kind object becomes iconic, and derived shapes are still being consumed twenty years after the initial consumption, how is one to study and understand its popularity? The goal of this paper is to put the cone-shaped corset into a broader perspective while trying to comprehend whether the fame and everlasting popularity of the corset could be most fruitfully understood as part of Adorno and Horkheimer's *culture industry*, or as part of Deleuze and Guattari's *rhizome*. In order to answer this question, first the characteristics of - and differences between - the concepts of *culture industry* and *rhizome* will be examined. Secondly, the original cone-shaped corset will be studied in detail. How and why did this object cause such a stir in the 1990s? In addition, the derived forms of the cone-shaped corset will be examined in order to develop an understanding of the way in which the iconic remains of the cone-shaped corset are being consumed today. Finally, this paper will examine the added value of both theoretical perspectives in order to create a deeper understanding of the iconic cone-shaped corset and its derived forms.

Culture Industry: Standardization And Passiveness

How is one to view the cone-shaped corset and its continuing consumption as a retroactive process of the *culture industry*? When do objects qualify to be part of this process? And does regarding the corset as an object of culture industry do justice to the way we regard the corset in every day life, or would a rhizomatic perspective provide us with more valuable insights? In each case it is important to understand the characteristics of - and crucial differences between - the two concepts.

According to Adorno and Horkheimer, the most important characteristic of the *culture industry* is *homogeneity* and *predictability*.²⁰ These characteristics lead to an easily readable message, which is "hidden" within every product produced by the *culture industry*. Adorno states that this homogeneous and predictable character of the *culture industry* is an ongoing process because of two underlying principles: *standardization* and *passiveness*.²¹ The first principle, standardization, derives when an object has proven itself successful. As from then on, the object is exploited to commercial exhaustion. Adorno states that the exploitation of standardized processes is done in order to escape the risks which "New" objects and "New" processes will bring along.²² In order to keep producing the "Old" over and over again, small adjustments are made within its production.²³ If this production process is viewed as the production of objects, and as the production of the ongoing interactions between those objects, the question arises whether the cone-shaped corset has proven itself successful within the *culture industry* when Madonna wore it in 1990, and, if so, whether this is the reason why it is still being consumed today.

Passiveness, the second underlying principle of the homogenous and predictable character of the *culture industry*, refers to Adorno's statement that there is an "avoidance of effort".²⁴ In the introduction it was stated that other pop artists such as Lady Gaga, Rihanna, Katy Perry and Kylie Minogue have worn very similar ensembles to the original cone-shaped corset. Do such similar ensembles imply "avoidance of effort" as they refer to (or arguably even copy) an iconic moment in pop music, and can they therefore be marked as acts of passiveness, or is there more to these similar looking ensembles? Adorno states that this passiveness comes from the fact that the *culture industry* has classified, organized and labelled everything and everyone.²⁵ While organizing and classifying everything, all receive a place within the *culture industry*. Perhaps the proper perspective of examining the notion of passiveness is within this organization and classification process; perhaps people are passive because the *culture industry* offers them a wide range of

19 Parr 2010, p. 232.

20 Storey 2007, p. 62.

21 Storey 2007, p. 64.

22 Adorno 1997, p. 134.

23 Adorno 1997, p. 136.

24 Storey 2007, p. 67.

25 Adorno 1997, pp. 122-125.

choices within its own structure; perhaps there is no urge for activeness. Adorno argues that the consumers are under the spell of the myth of success, which is created within the *culture industry* and therefore are more than happy to function within this system.²⁶ Does this explain why other pop artists are wearing ensembles similar to the original cone-shaped corset twenty years later – are they referring to the mythological and iconic success of Madonna, the “Queen of Pop”?

Rhizomes: Resistance And Multiplicities

Adorno and Horkheimer’s theory can be regarded as completely antithetical in comparison to Deleuze’s and Guattari’s theory: where the *culture industry* is characterized by passiveness, the *rhizome* is characterized by resistance; where the *culture industry* is characterized by standardization, the *rhizomic* perspective on culture reveals multiplicities and differences. This pivotal opposition may present a countercultural view on the cone-shaped corset.

Deleuze and Guattari’s theory of the *rhizome* resists actively against the rationale processes of thinking. Deleuze and Guattari call this rationale way of thinking “arborescent”.²⁷ This *arborescent* structure, or in other words tree-like structure, is based on a central unity: the root of the tree. Due to this root, the tree grows and develops structurally: first the trunk, then the branches, followed up by the leaves. This process and development implies a predetermined structure. Therefore, this *arborescent* structure reflects a process of thinking which is not free, but part of a hierarchy. Deleuze and Guattari regard this way of thinking as biased since every idea leads back to the root of the tree.²⁸

At first glance the notion of *arborescent* thinking seems to have many similarities with the process of standardization as described by Adorno and Horkheimer. When translated to the case of the conical corset, Madonna’s corset from the Blonde Ambition World Tour in 1990 is the root of the tree, the beginning of it all. From this stems Gaultier’s designing of similar ensembles, followed by other pop artists such as Lady Gaga, Rihanna, Kylie Minogue and Katy Perry wearing derived ensembles, and finally, followed by acts of irony such as the KPN add or the performance from *Toddlers and Tiaras*. The main difference is that Adorno and Horkheimer seem to regard individuals as powerless beings within the system of the *culture industry*. In order for anything to change, this whole system would need to be re-organized from within. While Adorno and Horkheimer depart from passive individuals, Deleuze and Guattari introduced the concept of the *rhizome* as a way of thinking in order to empower individuals to break out of the *arborescent*, or standardized, structure.²⁹ In other words, Deleuze and Guattari depart from the ability of activeness.

Rhizomic thinking enables individuals to disentangle themselves from *arborescent* thinking as it takes away all the structure. The concept of the *rhizome* indeed departs from biology, and is literally “a form of a plant that can extend itself through its underground horizontal tuber-like root system and develop new plants”.³⁰ A *rhizome* is characterized by the fact that there is no fixed structure. This enables various openings and connections to come into being.³¹ The importance of these possible new openings and connections lies in the fact that they enable new ways of thinking: they enable the creation of alternative routes in thinking.³² Being able to create through *rhizomatic* thought is of major importance for Deleuze and Guattari, since “whenever one creates, one resists”.³³

How can this *rhizomatic* way of thinking shed a different light on the cone-shaped corset and its derived forms? One principle of the *rhizome* that is determined by Deleuze and Guattari is that of *multiplicity*.³⁴ A basic definition of the highly abstract notion is that of “a complex structure that does not reference a prior

26 Adorno 1997, p. 134.

27 Deleuze 1991, p. 25; Deleuze 2004 pp. 23-25.

28 Deleuze 2004, p. 25.

29 Scheepers cited in: Deleuze 2004, p. 18.

30 Parr 2005, p. 232.

31 Sanders preface in: Deleuze 2004, pp. 9, 13.

32 Scheepers cited in: Deleuze 2004, p. 11.

33 CHARLES J. STIVALE -- N-Z SUMMARY OF L'ABÉCÉDAIRE DE GILLES DELEUZE 2004.

34 Deleuze 2007, p. 27.

unity”.³⁵ In other words: a *multiplicity* is not a fragmented whole, neither is it a single concept multiplied many times.³⁶ This distinction is important to understand as it excludes labelling the cone-shaped corset a *multiplicity* purely based on the ongoing consumption of the corset among other pop artists such as Lady Gaga and Rihanna.

This final concept shows the contradictiveness between Adorno and Horkheimer’s theory, and Deleuze and Guattari’s theory. While Adorno and Horkheimer view the ongoing consumption of a (derived) object as a successful reproduction by the *culture industry*, Deleuze and Guattari state that this process should be examined as a *multiplicity* depending on various “actors and elements”, meaning the focus should be on the difference rather than the reproduction and identification of an “original”.³⁷ The mention of the concept of “actors” may imply a script, which at first glance could look rather contradictory to a *rhizomatic* mode of thought. The opposite is true; *multiplicities* do have scripts, but not the same systematically standardized ones that Adorno and Horkheimer mention. *Multiplicities* have *rhizomatic* scripts, which are unstructured and accidental. Trying to understand these rhizomatic scripts, or *maps* as Deleuze and Guattari call them, is crucial for the exposition of *rhizomatic* processes within objects.³⁸

Mapping The Original Cone-Shaped Corset

Adorno and Horkheimer, as well as Deleuze and Guattari, talk about scripts and maps that could help shape an understanding about the attached and created understanding of an object’s function. Was there an underlying script or map present during the design and mediation process of the cone-shaped corset? If so, what are the crucial moments that imply the existence of a script? By closely “reading” the original cone-shaped corset such a script may be discovered.

While examining the design of the cone-shaped corset, the rather contradictory combination of female elements and tough elements immediately stands out. Gaultier applied a feminine style of corsetry which was common during the 1950s; the conical brassier; the straps above the cups; the suspenders; the bones; the eyelets and lace closing; the soft nude peach colour; and finally, the utilization of new fabrics like Lycra and nylon. These dominant elements make the object look like a corset, even though a few elements, which are unusual for corseting, were applied into the same design: the bronze coloured, coarse zipper; the metal popper which can be closed between the legs; and the use of innovative fabrics.

Since Gaultier received a detailed briefing from the object’s wearer, and the terms of use – a costume for the “Blond Ambition” tour - it is safe to assume that Gaultier knew Madonna would be dancing in the corset. Therefore, a few of the unusual elements applied can be explained as choices that would enable Madonna to move freely, and to change outfits quickly between performances. For instance, by making the girdle out of Lycra, Madonna’s torso was flexible, and by closing the metal popper between the legs, the Lycra was prevented from riding/curling up. The combination of the Lycra and the metal popper is extremely important for the corset appears like an optically flawless “hard case” corset. The zipper at the centre of the corset could be explained as a solution for Madonna to change wardrobes quickly, but functionality does not explain why Gaultier chose for such a noticeable coarse bronze zipper. After all, Gaultier could have made a tiny paradigmatic change by choosing a blind zipper. That would have resulted into a much softer appearance that would suit the feminine aspect of the corset much better. The fact that he did not do so implies that Gaultier consciously fused toughness within the corset by applying a coarse bronze zipper surrounded by an extremely female shape and colour.

This toughness was not only achieved by the utilization of a coarse metal zipper, but also by, perhaps, the most striking elements of the iconoclastic corset: the cone-shaped cups. While examining the details of the cups it stands out that they are extremely severe; the points of older versions of cone-shaped cups from the 1950s were never as sharp looking as Gaultier’s cups. By choosing such sharp points at the ends of the

35 Parr 2005, p. 181.

36 Parr 2005, p. 181.

37 Parr 2005, p. 181.

38 Deleuze 2004, pp. 32, 33.

cones, Gaultier made the cups appear like possibly hurtful objects, even weapons. Besides, the stitching on the cone-shaped cups optically strengthens the sharp appearance of the cups since the stitching is done vertically into the direction of the point of the cup; therefore the stitching, literally, points towards the sharpness of the cup. A minimal paradigmatic change in the stitching, for example stitching in horizontal circles around the cup, would cause a different optical effect and a much softer appearance of the cup, which would be more similar to the soft and feminine appearance of the coned-shaped cups of the 1950s.³⁹ In addition, the lustrous fabric also visually strengthens the sharp appearance of the cone-shaped cups since the largest part of the corset's fabric has a matte surface. The same lustrous fabric is applied at the centre of the corset, but its effect is minimized by the use of a braiding technique, hence, the cone shaped cups stand out maximally. The pointy shape and lustre fabric combined make the cups look like harmful weapons, which connote aggressiveness and/or roughness. Gaultier combined this aggressiveness with a soft peach colour and many references to traditional female corsetry.

Madonna wore the conical corset during the song "Express Yourself". While examining old recordings of this performance, it becomes clear that Gaultier's combination of rough and female details within the design of the corset was part of the briefing. During the performance, three things are striking: clothing, bodily movement and sexual expression.⁴⁰ Before Madonna enters the stage, seven muscular males dressed in mere jeans and shoes are walking across the stage. Their appearance, and the fact that they look scruffy, reminds one of a worker such as a car mechanic. When Madonna appears, she looks much more distinguished than the men, since she is wearing a pinstriped suit and a corset; two items which belong to the traditional male and female wardrobe. This implies a different social status: the unskilled workers versus the thriving businesswoman.

During the first few seconds of the performance, the corset is "covered" with a double-breasted blazer. Madonna's cone-shaped breasts protrude through holes in the blazer. This ripping apart of a symbolical male piece by a symbolical female body part implies a certain victory of the female gender. Subsequently, the corset is worn *on top of*, instead of *underneath*, the trousers which might signify, once again, a female victory and/or dominance over the male.⁴¹

Madonna sings the song "Express Yourself", while the conical corset is displayed. The song is about empowering women to ask and expect the best from men; it is about forcing men to express their feelings/love in order to show women their respect:

"Don't go for second best baby
Put your love to the test
[...]
You deserve the best in life
[...]
Second best is never enough
You'll do much better baby on your own
[...]
Express yourself (You've got to make him)
So you can respect yourself"⁴²

The clothing literally shows that Madonna and her two female backup dancers are already doing much better on their own, since there is a distinction between business and working clothes. Apart from the clothing,

39 Doyle 1997, pp. 205, 209.

40 Various recordings of various performances of "Express Yourself" during the "Blonde Ambition" tour were examined. Two slightly different choreographies were discovered. In the bibliography they are separately marked as "YOUTUBE a" and as "YOUTUBE b".

41 It must be noted here that Deleuze and Guattari do not favor looking for signifiers and meaning, yet for the examination of 'a script' in this context it is of value and presented here as such.

42 MADONNA LYRICS.

another element of the “Express Yourself” performance strengthens this message: the bodily movement.⁴³ While Madonna and her two female backup dancers move intensively and actively, the male dancers are bending over and strolling listlessly across the stage.

A final aspect that strengthens Madonna’s forceful appearance is her aggressiveness on stage towards her male dancers. She executes many sexually aggressive movements towards the numb looking, and numb moving, men during the choreography. Most of those sexual movements were, and still are today, movements that only a person with male physical characteristics can perform towards another person. Simultaneously, not only is Madonna’s sexual expression aggressive; her gaze is too. During many parts of the choreography the male dancers turn away anxiously when Madonna looks at them. This brings to mind the mythological character of Medusa; not only Madonna’s muscled body and her ability to move in the corset are intimidating, her gaze, literally, dismisses the male gaze.

In conclusion, it is evident that the whole process, from design to mediation, is strictly scripted since during every part of the process a clear combination between femaleness and roughness/aggressiveness was chosen.

Descendants From The Original Cone-Shaped Corset

Regardless of the fact that the cone-shaped corset is the private property of Madonna, and has not been worn in the past two decades, it is still being consumed today. While examining various garments which appear to be descendants from the original conical corset, three kinds of consumption tendencies of the original conical corset become evident: first there is the consumption of the conical corset by Gaultier, the designer of the original conical corset. Secondly, many outspoken pop artists, such as Lady Gaga, Rihanna and Katy Perry, have been spotted wearing either almost identical copies of the conical corset, or different kinds of corsets/brassieres that have characteristics similar to the original conical corset. The third consumption process is characterized by the creation of irony, such as the KPN add which can be seen in bus shelters with an older, and slightly, overweight Madonna look-a-like; or the performance of a two-year-old girl in *Toddlers and Tiaras* in a gold conical corset which shares, except for the colour, many physical characteristics with the peach coloured corset.⁴⁴

The various consumption processes of the conical corset seem to all be parting from the same object: the original cone-shaped corset designed by Gaultier. Does this assumption imply that the original cone-shaped corset is a *multiplicity* since it functions as an element/an actor that is part of many designs with different functions? Or, does this imply that the original cone-shaped corset has proven itself as a commercially successful product of the *culture industry*, which is driven by the mythological success of Madonna? In order to explore both visions further, an example within each category will be examined.

Gaultier has been applying the concept of the cone-shaped cups for over six years before designing the cone-shaped corset for Madonna in 1990. Today, over twenty years later, Gaultier still includes this concept in almost every collection. In the years before designing the cone-shaped corset for Madonna’s tour, Gaultier chose more brightly coloured, and thicker materials. Following the design of the cone-shaped corset, a shift seems to have taken place: most of Gaultier’s designs have very similar characteristics to the object of this paper: from the fabric to the stitching of the cup, the design of the cone-shaped corset seems to have become Gaultier’s trademark, and can be seen in every collection. Even more commercial designer collaborations, such as the one with La Perla, include similar looking versions of the famous corset. Gaultier’s design process and use of the iconic cups appears to have transformed since the success of the cone-shaped corset he designed for Madonna. It seems that at first, before the cone-shaped corset of 1990, Gaultier was experimenting with various shapes and concepts, while afterwards he started creating very similar looking corsets. Therefore the assumption can be made that the “original” conical corset has proven itself successful during the last two decades - as Adorno and Horkheimer’s theory suggests - and laid the foundation for some of Gaultier’s future designs.

43 YOUTUBE a; YOUTUBE b.

44 YOUTUBE a.

Lady Gaga wore an extremely comparable corset during an interview. This heated the already fierce quarrel between the Lady Gaga fans and the Madonna fans.⁴⁵ The original meanings attached to the corset – femaleness, roughness and aggressiveness – were completely left out of this new discussion, which was mainly focused on originality and authenticity: Madonna fans claim that Lady Gaga stole Madonna’s successful songs and outfits. While at first glance Lady Gaga’s corset indeed looks almost identical, by taking into account Deleuze and Guattari’s theory it could be argued that Lady Gaga is trying to change the arborescent structure surrounding the cone-shaped corset by, metaphorically speaking, breaking with the roots of the Madonna tree. Without speculating about what Lady Gaga’s purpose may have been, it is arguable that the processes set into action by Lady Gaga’s corset are completely different to the processes that Madonna’s corset started in the 1990s. Where in the 1990s it was a discussion regarding power of the male and female sex, in 2009, it was a discussion regarding new aesthetics and originality. Therefore it must be acknowledged that, through Deleuze and Guattari’s perspective, the function of the corset, how similar in appearance it may be, is utterly different. While, completely opposite, it can also be argued that Lady Gaga lives off Madonna’s success and, in that case, this is the ultimate example of the *culture industry*. However, it seems as if this view on the derived example of the corset is too narrow as it does not acknowledge the many differences, mostly regarding function, that occurred when Lady Gaga wore it.

A final example is the performance of a two-year-old girl in the series *Toddlers and Tiaras*.⁴⁶ The performance is a mix of various Madonna songs.⁴⁷ During the performance the two-year-old forgets her routine, or is not aware that she has to do a routine. Therefore her mother comes on stage and starts to move her. At a certain point, the two-year-old girl is standing in front of the judges and, ironically, grabs the cone shaped cups and playfully squeezes them. The performance has been viewed over 190,000 times on YouTube, and there are over 200, mostly angry, comments.⁴⁸ Throughout this consumption process the conical corset became part of a strong discussion on questionable parenting and paedophilia. It seems like the initiative of the two-year-old child wearing the corset did stem from recreating Madonna’s iconic appearance in the cone-shaped corset. Therefore, this consumption process could be regarded as part product of the *culture industry*. However, this type of consumption provoked an entirely different discussion at the end, even though it is a negative one, it can be argued that the derived corset in this case, as well in the Lady Gaga case, served an entirely different function. Therefore the object’s consumption process can be viewed as one that created a new *rhizomatic* process.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the main difference between Deleuze and Guattari’s theory and Adorno and Horkheimer’s theory is that the former proffers space to acknowledge *differences* while the latter departs from *uniformity*. While at first glance it may seem that all corsets similar to Madonna’s original ensemble are copies and therefore part of the *culture industry*. However, this approach appears to be too shallow after closely examining the processes that were set into action when others, such as Lady Gaga or the two-year-old toddler, wore similar corsets. It becomes visible that the wearing of derived ensembles of the original corset is an *active* act as in each case the corset creates a new function and, therefore, sets new processes (e.g. discussions) into action. This excludes the notion of *passiveness* that is essential in Adorno and Horkheimer’s theory. What is more, it is arguable that the different corsets did depart from Madonna’s original ensemble but this paper has proven that they simultaneously have a multiple working; they are part of a *rhizomatic* process. In this *rhizome* the corset serves multiple functions that, as discussed, often do not even come close to the process that was set into action after Madonna wore the original corset. In short, the added value of employing Deleuze and Guattari’s theory of the *rhizome* is that it offers the “tools” to deeply analyse the case in question by examining the differences while still acknowledging certain similarities.

45 Hix 2011; Wright 2010; YOUTUBE a.

46 YOUTUBE a.

47 The music (Like a Prayer) and the clothing (angel wings, conical corset) is not combined within any performance during Madonna’s career. This was most likely initiated by the mother of the two-year-old child.

48 YOUTUBE a.

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Celebrities as Icons for positioning Indian Men's Suiting

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Abstract

Purpose - The purpose of this paper is to examine the influence of celebrity endorsement on the positioning of Indian Men's suiting.

Design/Methodology/Approach - This was achieved by exploratory research done on Indian Men's formal wear brands like Raymonds, Mayur, Grasims and Reid & Taylor. Survey was done on 150 men to find the influence of celebrity icons on their brand choice

Findings - "Product + Celebrity = Brand; Product + Celebrity + message = instant connect." In UK, one in five marketing communications campaigns feature celebrities. In India, they not only feature in TV commercials and print ads but also in 'Events' and door-to-door campaigns. A consumer wearing a suit which featured Shahrukh Khan in the advertisements of Mayur and Belmonte can get into a fantasy associated with the celebrity. Shahrukh Khan and Amitabh Bachchan, both have a special aura that attracts men to purchase the suiting they endorse, to experience the same pleasure which the celebrities experience. The man who purchases the Reid and Taylor suit perceives Amitabh Bachchan of having the relevant experience and therefore they trust Amitabh Bachchan to share with the consumer the true experience of wearing a Reid and Taylor suit. In the Indian scenario, it is impossible to find a celebrity endorser who is not physically attractive. Indian men would also look for a matchup between the brand image and the image of the celebrity like in the case of Grasim suiting's for the self made, being endorsed by a celebrity who has been known for his struggle as a chef, as a martial arts trainer and then to stardom, Akshay Kumar.

Research Limitations/Implications - Exact analysis cannot be reached keeping in mind the varied tastes and preferences of the culturally scattered Indian customer.

Practical Implications - This research is useful for men's formal wear brands that are willing to enter the Indian market.

Introduction

The use of Celebrity icons in marketing has emerged as an ubiquitous feature of contemporary marketing (McCracken, 1989). Celebrity icons are widely used to endorse a wide range of consumer products and services, and some even endorse multiple products (Tripp, Jenson and Carlson, 1994). A celebrity icon may be defined as "any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement" (McCracken 1989). Despite being costly in character, there has been an extensive and constant use of celebrities in promotion, which suggest that marketing managers and investors continue to trust that celebrity endorsements are a worthwhile component of the advertising strategy.

Celebrity endorsements, whose evolution could be traced back to the second half of the 19th century in the U.S. with one early example being dated at 1864 (Kaitaki 1987, p.93), is now a full grown industry. Of the billions of dollars allocated annually for television advertising, approximately 10 percent is spent on endorsers (Agrawal and Kamakura, 1995). The percentage of commercials worldwide featuring a celebrity has doubled in the last 10 years to about 17 percent (White, 2004). In the United States alone, the use of celebrities in advertisements has increased from 10 to 25 percent over the last decade, according to



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My name is Shagun Sawhney. I'm born and brought up in New Delhi. I'm doing my Masters in Fashion Marketing. Before getting into the field of marketing I had pursued my graduation in Philosophy from Gargi College (Delhi University), where I had topped my college and stood 3rd in Delhi University. I did my schooling from Tagore international School.

I am a passionate, optimistic & dedicated woman who takes up responsibilities with utmost enthusiasm and see to it that I complete my tasks and assignments in time. I've a great amount of perseverance to achieve my goal. My optimistic and planned approach in things I do is what drives me towards my success.

As how I strive for perfection in things, I expect the same from others as well. If things go out of control or go way out of track, I go an extra mile and contribute my efforts, in getting things done in time.

In my free time I love to watch movies – a good inclination towards serious cinema.

Keywords: Celebrity Icons, Consumer, Shahrukh Khan, Akshay Kumar, Amitabh Bachchan

another estimate (Shimp, 2000; Stafford, Spears, and Hsu, 2003). More or less it seems to have become a global practice

Celebrities chosen as icons should be knowledgeable, experienced and qualified in order to be perceived as an expert in the category. Two models were initially identified to explain the process of celebrity endorsement.

The Source Credibility Model

Source credibility is the extent to which the recipient perceives the source as having relevant knowledge and/or experience and therefore trusts the source to give unbiased information. This definition clearly indicates that source credibility encompasses two distinct components, namely expertise and trustworthiness, which affect message believability and persuasiveness (Hovland and Weiss, 1951).

Expertise is defined as the perceived ability of the source to make valid assertions (Hovland and Weiss, 1951). Spokespersons are often chosen because of their knowledge, experience and expertise in a particular product or service area and research undertaken on this dimension of source effectiveness indicates that expertise has the greatest impact on respondents' reactions to celebrity icons in advertisements (Ohanian, 1991).

Trustworthiness is defined as the receiver's belief that the source is willing to make valid assertions (Hovland and Weiss, 1951). Generally speaking, trustworthiness is supportive attribute underlying source credibility. Without it, other attributes possessed by the communicator are unlikely to be effective in producing attitude change. Research conducted by Atkin and Block (1983) found that celebrity characters are perceived as being significantly more trustworthy than non-celebrities in research conducted across all respondent age groups. However, while trustworthiness is unquestionably an important element of message receptivity, research conducted by Ohanian (1991) found it is not necessarily an important element in specifically affecting product purchase intentions.

Source Attractiveness

Society right through the ages has determined that particular character of persons is attractive. It is therefore to be expected that physical attractiveness as a source attribute would affect the receptivity of the message. Indeed, there is considerable research evidence which attests to the positive consequences of employing attractive spokespersons based on the principle that receivers make more favourable evaluations of the advertisement and the product when attractive models are used in the advertisement (Joseph, 1982; Kahle and Homer, 1985; Chaiken, 1979). There is, however, some contrary evidence (Maddux and Rogers, 1980; Ohanian, 1991) which suggests that physical attractiveness may not be especially significant. Two discrete elements of source attractiveness are generally identified by researchers, namely likeability and similarity.

Likeability refers to the presence or absence of feelings that the receiver of a message would have towards a source of information. Likeability as a phenomenon is obviously related to attractiveness, as attractive people are generally looked upon more favourably than unattractive ones. A comparative study regarding the likeability of celebrity icons vs. consumers as spokespersons showed that celebrity icons were rated best for the criterion 'likeable spokesperson' (Frieden, 1984). While much research has indicated that for a source to be effective as a persuader, he or she must rate highly on the likeability dimension, there are conflicting opinions on this issue. Research undertaken by Kahle and Homer (1985) strongly questioned the effectiveness of likeability as a persuasive characteristic of the source in influencing purchase intentions.

A further source characteristic deemed to be effective is the extent to which the presenter is perceived to be similar to the target audience. The more in common the recipient perceives he has with the source, the greater the expressiveness of the message delivered by the source. A source that is presented as being similar to the audience in terms of attitudes, opinions, activities, background, social status or lifestyle could achieve both liking and identification (Aaker et al., 1992). Several studies have shown that customers

who perceive a sales person as similar to themselves are more likely to be influenced by his or her message (Woodside and Davenport, 1974; Busch and Willson, 1976).

To examine the influence of celebrity endorsement on the positioning of Indian Men's suiting. A study was carried out which sought to research the influence of celebrity endorsements on consumers. More specifically, the research was developed

- to determine consumers' attitudes towards celebrity icons in advertisements
- to establish the impact of the perceived images of the celebrity icons on product purchase intentions
- to examine that do consumers expect a congruence between celebrity icons perceived images and brand image

Research Study

To examine the influence of celebrity endorsement and to investigate specified research questions, a questionnaire was developed and administered to a systematically selected sample of consumers (male) (n = 150) in shopping centres of New Delhi over a three week period. The questionnaire was composed of four major sections. Section one of the questionnaire sought respondents' attitudes towards celebrity icons in men's suiting. The second section of the questionnaire measured respondent's perceptions of three celebrity icons along the following source attributes: credibility, trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness, personality and likeability. The third section measured the celebrity icons perceived image on purchasing the suiting by the consumer. The fourth section measured the congruence between the celebrity icons and brand image.

The celebrity icons chosen are the Bollywood stars that are known and recognized by the public. Amitabh Bachchan has appeared in over 180 Indian films in a career spanning more than four decades. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest and most influential actors in the history of Indian cinema. He is regarded to be the last superstar of Bollywood; Shahrukh Khan is considered to be one of the biggest film stars in cinematic history, with a fan following claimed to number in the billions; Khan has acted in 75 Hindi films in genres ranging from romantic dramas to action thrillers; in 2011, the Los Angeles Times called him "the world's biggest movie star" Akshay Kumar is an Indian film actor, producer and martial artist who has appeared in over a hundred Hindi films. He has been nominated for Filmfare Awards several times. Apart from acting, Kumar has worked as a stunt actor; he has often performed many dangerous stunts in his films, which has earned him a reputation as the "Indian Jackie Chan"

In total, 150 males answered the questionnaire.

Research Findings

The research findings consist of four main sections:

- (i) Consumers' attitudes towards celebrity icons in men's suiting;
- (ii) Celebrity icons attributes as perceived by the respondents;
- (iii) Effect of the celebrity icons perceived images on the purchase of suiting;
- (iv) Analysis of celebrity icons and product appropriateness/ inappropriateness.

i. Attitudes towards Celebrity icons in advertisements in men's suiting

The overall attitude towards celebrity icons were encouraging one. 91 percent respondents were most in agreement with the statement that celebrity icons in advertisements were attention-gaining. Celebrity icons were also perceived to be entertaining, likeable, and impactful. According to the respondents the celebrity icons were convincing but not believable, in terms of the experience gained after wearing the suiting they endorsed.

ii. Celebrity icons characteristics

The second finding concerns the respondents' perceptions of the three celebrity icons on the following source attributes: experience/expertise, physical attractiveness/personality, and trustworthiness. Personality was measured by forming a composite value of evaluations of the celebrities along three attributes: admirability, charisma and friendliness.

Amitabh Bachchan being the oldest in the Indian film industry was considered as an experienced man by 93 percent respondents, he also has a huge fan following and a positive aura around him which was indicated by the respondents on the other hand for Shahrukh Khan physical attractiveness had the highest score (70 out of 150 respondents). Akshay Kumar was perceived to be trustworthy by 62 percent of respondents, credible, and attractive and regarded as having an attractive personality. However, he was not considered to be highly likeable.

Each of the three celebrity icons were considered to possess expertise and gained experience by leading different paths of their lives. Amitabh Bachchan was perceived to be the best in the industry he is the rightly chosen endorser for Reid & Taylor- Bond with the Best. Shahrukh Khan is perceived as the style icon, the respondents considered him as the appropriate choice for Belmonte- suits your style and Mayur. Akshay Kumar who has risen from a lay man to a super star perfectly endorses Grasim's for the self-made.

iii. Effect of the Celebrity Icons Perceived Images on Product Purchase Intentions

The third major finding was concerned with the effect of the celebrity icons perceived images on product purchase intentions. The six source attributes were correlated with the intention to purchase variable for the three celebrities and product categories.

➤ Impact of Celebrity icons Perceived Credibility on Intention to Purchase men's suiting:

There was a high correlation between perceived credibility and intention to purchase for Amitabh Bachchan, Shahrukh Khan and Akshay Kumar, though the respondents who rated Amitabh Bachchan (55 percent) as the highest did not match the scores for Shahrukh Khan and Akshay Kumar. Credibility is thus an important source attribute affecting product purchase intentions.

➤ Impact of Celebrity icons perceived Trustworthiness on Intention to Purchase men's suiting:

Most of the respondents (47 percent) correlated trustworthiness with Shahrukh Khan since they wanted to be as stylish as him. Amitabh Bachchan was also trusted by a few but the charisma of Shahrukh Khan was more attractive. The respondents remarked that even though Akshay Kumar is equally trustworthy they would prefer to buy a Mayur or Belmonte suiting that is endorsed by Shahrukh Khan. From this it can be concluded that trustworthiness is not an important source of attribute affecting the purchase of men's suiting.

➤ Impact of Celebrity's Perceived Expertise on Intention to Purchase men's suiting:

There was a high correlation (93 percent) between knowledgeability of product category and the 'intention to purchase' the suiting. The correlation was positive and was significant because the respondents correlated knowledge that Amitabh Bachchan has with the tagline of the brand Bond with the best. Amitabh Bachchan once again topped the charts by 38% whereas the struggle of the actor, Akshay Kumar, best suited with the brand he endorsed due to which 34% were for him. In effect this illustrates that expertise as a source attribute is an important determinant of intention to purchase.

➤ Impact of Celebrity icons Attractiveness on Intention to Purchase men's suiting:

A significant correlation (58 percent) between attractiveness and intention to purchase did exist since the men were attracted to be as stylist as the actor, to feel the way the actor does and to be in the same suit as the actor. Shahrukh Khan was considered as the style icon by most of the respondent which was the major factor for the purchase of the brand followed by Amitabh Bachchan.

➤ Impact of Celebrity icons likeability on Intention to Purchase men's suiting:

An overall significant correlation was observed between likeability of the celebrity icons and intention to purchase the suiting endorsed by the celebrity icon. A total of 86 % respondents preferred to purchase a Reid & Taylor endorsed by Amitabh Bachchan or Belmonte by Shahrukh Khan.

➤ Impact of Celebrity icons Personality on Intention to Purchase men's suiting:

Again, a significant correlation between personality and intention to purchase existed in the aura and personality that attracted the consumer to purchase a Belmonte which has Shahrukh Khan as an icon (54 percent) and was much higher than the suiting that is endorsed by Akshay Kumar.

iv. Celebrity icon and Product Congruence

The answers pertaining to celebrity icon -product appropriateness/inappropriateness revealed many interesting findings. It was found that the consumers expect congruence between celebrities' image and the brand they endorse. The brands that were endorsed by the celebrity icons deemed to be appropriate

Amitabh Bachchan

Respondents considered Amitabh Bachchan to be a big name of the Indian film industry. The experience that he has gained over the years acted as a positive feature for him. This experience leads him to become the best in the industry, and so he was chosen as the endorser for Reid & Taylor- Bond with the best. Having been chosen after James Bond, who did not really work as an appropriate endorser for Indian since the customers perceived it to be expensive because of its international icon. Amitabh lifted the brand to a much higher level in connecting with Indian consumer. The positioning was not changed but the message was to create an image of affordability. The baseline was "Bond with the Best" was in line with the positioning.

Amitabh Bachchan fits perfectly to the brand persona (86% of the respondents). He is the style icon and commands immense equity with the customers

Shahrukh Khan

Shahrukh Khan has indeed come a long way since he made his entry into Bollywood films over twenty years ago. He is one of the most influential figures in the Indian film industry today and has a global fan following which only few actors have managed to secure. Belmonte has taken up style as its differentiator and Shahrukh Khan projects himself as the style icon, who the youth can follow blindly. No other brand has taken style as its positioning platform hence Belmonte stands to gain some advantage. Belmonte is endorsed by Shah Rukh Khan and is being positioned as a "Stylish" brand. The brand takes the tagline "Suits Your Style". According to the 79% of the respondents the high likeability of Shahrukh Khan will make the youth want to purchase a Belmonte suiting.

Shahrukh Khan also endorsed the brand Mayur-Stars ki Pasand. ShahRukh Khan endorsed this brand for four years, but he was dropped since he did not reach the stardom during that period. Later the brand was endorsed by Chandrachur Singh, Sharad Kapoor, Lisa Ray and Virendra Sewag., After Shahrukh Khan the brand was not able to sustain the momentum. With ShahRukh Khan, the company hit upon a novel idea of catching the stars with potential to make it big. "Stars ki Pasand" offers no meaningful differentiation for the brand since the believability of the positioning is minimal. The brand is in the "Value for Money" category which itself makes "Stars Ki Pasand" unbelievable.

Akshay Kumar

Akshay is known for his humble beginning a boy who was born in Amritsar and raised in the lanes of Chandni Chowk and his struggle in life as a cook, a martial arts trainer and then to stardom. Akshay Kumar got ₹4,000 that is 73.05 USD as his monthly salary for teaching martial arts. He is appropriately been chosen as the brand ambassador of Grasim's- the self made. The tagline suits no one better other than this

star. Akshay Kumar has been the right choice, also because the story of the brand and the story of this actor are perfectly congruent with each other.

67 percent respondents could relate to Akshay Kumar as he has risen from scratch. The brand image and the image of the star did go hand in hand but the research showed that Grasim's was the least popular brand among the consumers.

59 percent respondents preferred to buy the brand endorsed by Shahrukh Khan due to the charisma that the star carries with him all around.

Conclusion

“Product + Celebrity = Brand; Product + Celebrity + message = instant connect.” In UK, one in five marketing communications campaigns feature celebrities. In India, they not only feature in TV commercials and print ads but also in ‘Events’ and door-to-door campaigns. A consumer wearing a suit which featured Shahrukh Khan in the advertisements of Mayur and Belmonte can get into a fantasy associated with the celebrity. Shahrukh Khan and Amitabh Bachchan, both have a special aura that attracts men to purchase the suiting they endorse, to experience the same pleasure which the celebrities experience. The man who purchases the Reid and Taylor suit perceives Amitabh Bachchan of having the relevant experience and therefore they trust Amitabh Bachchan to share with the consumer the true experience of wearing a Reid and Taylor suit. In the Indian scenario, it is impossible to find a celebrity endorser who is not physically attractive. Indian men would also look for a matchup between the brand image and the image of the celebrity like in the case of Grasim suitings for the self made, being endorsed by a celebrity who has been known for his struggle as a chef, as a martial arts trainer and then to stardom, Akshay Kumar..

The research results revealed that consumers hold favourable attitudes towards celebrity icons in advertisements. Respondents perceived celebrity icons to be attention-gaining, entertaining, likeable and impactful. However, they were not considered to be particularly convincing or believable.

Trustworthiness, likeability, attractiveness and personality of the celebrity icon did have an overall considerable impact on intention to purchase the suiting by different brands endorsed by three the celebrity icons. These source characteristics play an important role in attracting attention to both the endorsement and the brand, fulfilling a requirement in successful advertising. Once attention had been gained, other source characteristics could come into play and have a more persuasive impact on the audience. The source characteristics with the greatest impact on consumers' intention to purchase were those of credibility and attraction.

It was confirmed that consumers expect congruity between the celebrity icons perceived images and the suiting of different brands they endorse. Celebrity icons were considered to possess expertise in the suiting the endorsed which were consistent with their media images and the life styles they were perceived to lead. Advertisers must be cognisant of the image portrayed by the icons in their personal and public lives as this affects the way in which consumers perceive celebrities.

A favourable perception of the celebrity icon is necessarily extended to the intention to buy the endorsed product. The celebrity icon chosen must be seen as being a credible source in the eyes of the target audience and perceived to possess expertise regarding the product they are endorsing. Secondly, the celebrity icons image, as perceived by the target audience, must be congruent with the image of the brand they are endorsing. The findings of the study illustrate the need to employ consumer research as an aid to the choice of an appropriate celebrity with a view to mitigating the risks involved in celebrity endorsement.

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Bollywood Branding: 'Iconic' Marketing and Merchandising of Luxury Fashion & Lifestyles products in 21st Century India

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Abstract

This paper is an exploratory study on the influence of Bollywood branding on the new rich and traditional Indian luxury consumers for branded fashion jewelry and watches and tries to understand the effect of celebrity endorsement on the value perception of this segment.

Luxury Fashion brands are built on the premise of offering high symbolic value to a very selective segment of consumers that are more focused on high status and imagery associations; and follow a differentiation strategy based on brand experience and not just product attributes. The process of marketing communication used by luxury brands therefore plays an important role in the consumers' experience of a brand.

The Indian Luxury market is rapidly evolving and has witnessed a robust growth in the past year with an estimated market size of USD 5.75 billion. Contributing to this market of luxury consumers is the Indian film industry (Bollywood) with a growth potential of 18% per annum and currently estimated at USD 12.8 billion. The influence of Bollywood on the Indian consumer including the luxury segment has been wide and far reaching. This is even more apparent by the fact that today Bollywood celebrities are endorsing product ranges that vary from chocolates to personal care products, fashion apparels and luxury cars. The iconic standing of the Bollywood film fraternity has become a one stop shop for endorsement of fashion and lifestyle products in India.

The study is an outcome of focus group discussions with consumers, desk research, structured observations and interpretive research of the marketing communications vehicles of various jewelry and luxury watch brands available in the Indian market currently.

This paper will help luxury watches and jewelry brands to understand the perception value of Indian luxury consumers based on celebrity endorsement and will further help the luxury brands to choose or change celebrity endorser and use of icon based marketing communication strategies.

Introduction

The Indian luxury market is rapidly evolving and has witnessed a robust growth in the past year with an estimated market size of USD 5.75 billion (CII-AT Kearney, 2011). Contributing to this market of luxury consumers is the Indian film industry (Bollywood) with a growth potential of 18% per annum and currently estimated at USD 12.8 billion. The influence of Bollywood on the Indian consumer including the luxury segment has been wide and far reaching. This is even more apparent from the fact that today Bollywood celebrities are endorsing product ranges that vary from chocolates to personal care products, fashion apparels, jewelry, watches and luxury cars. The iconic standing of the Bollywood film fraternity has become a one stop shop for endorsement of fashion and lifestyle products in India.

Celebrity endorsement transfers the personality and status of the celebrity as successful, wealthy, and distinctive directly to the brand (Okonkwo, 2006). As luxury products are highly desirable even to celebrities, the strategy of such individuals using and endorsing these products creates an iconic stature for both the user and the product leading to the brand experience that equates the consumer to the status of the celebrity. Luxury fashion brands are built on the premise of offering high symbolic value to a very selective

Keywords: Celebrity endorsement, luxury watches and jewelry, Bollywood, luxury marketing

segment of consumers that are more focused on high status and imagery associations; and follow a differentiation strategy based on brand experience and not just product attributes. The process of marketing communication used by luxury brands therefore plays an important role in the consumers' experience of a brand.

The luxury market in India is at the beginning of its life cycle and growing at an exponential rate, and the Indian luxury consumer is young and aspirational. With a population of 1.2 billion people, India has 3,68,000 millionaires with combined assets worth of USD 3,560 billion. The concentration of India's wealthy population are the owners of Small and Medium size enterprises, who account for 40% of the country's manufacturing base and export industry (Luxury Society Report, 2011). The average Indian luxury customer values high quality, exclusivity and social appeal as key drivers of luxury purchase. This customer is price conscious and acquires goods and services based on the social recognition it will bring him.

The objective of this paper is to explore the influence of Bollywood celebrity endorsed branding on the new rich and traditional Indian luxury consumers with a focus on branded fashion jewelry and watches and to understand the effect of celebrity endorsement on the value perception of this segment.

The study is based on initial desk research through literature review to explore the context of the iconic nature of celebrities and celebrity endorsement in the Indian fashion and lifestyle industry, classification of luxury merchandise, and the Indian luxury consumer segment. The desk research has been then further explored and substantiated through questionnaires and un-structured interviews with consumers, structured observations and interpretive research of the marketing communications vehicles of various jewelry and luxury watch brands available in the Indian market currently.

Literature Review

Overview of the Indian Film Industry: The Mumbai based Indian film industry, better known as Bollywood, has sold dreams to India's millions since its inception in the early 1900s. Today Bollywood accounts for nearly 1100 film productions per annum, making it the single largest film industry globally, with an audience reach of Indians across the subcontinent and rest of the world (Lorenzen, 2009). The films produced here are mainly in the Indian national language of Hindi and hence the popularity and visibility of its stars and actors cuts across all the segments of the Indian society at home and abroad. According to Kriplani and Grover (2002) "Bollywood is developing its own strong global brand and is also becoming big business, attracting massive investments." In 2011 the industry's revenue earning was estimated US\$ 3bn. Growing at approximately 10.1% per annum and it is expected to reach US\$ 4.5 bn. by 2016 (DIBD-OMII, 2012). Bollywood films are watched by the Indian Diaspora across the globe and its worldwide presence has added to its immense popularity and following, giving its actors and stars an iconic stature in fan followings. Collaboration by international brands with the industry in media and entertainment alone accounts for an incremental business worth US\$ 3 bn., and does not take into account earnings through 'in film' product placements by popular brands like Starbuck, Coca Cola, Pepsi, Pizza Hut, Sony Vaio; premium brands like Calvin Klein, DKNY; and even luxury lifestyle and fashion brands like Audi, Mercedes, Chanel, Ferragamo etc. Bollywood actors are amongst some of the highest paid in the profession worldwide, with the current top five male actors receiving between US\$ 6 to 16 million per film and female actresses receiving about US\$ 1 to 1.5 million per film. With an annual viewing audience of 3 bn. people, and the larger than life image of its super stars, the Bollywood film industry is a very lucrative vehicle of direct and indirect product promotion and communication (Stafford, 2009).

Celebrity icons and the Indian consumer: An icon is a visual representation of an object of worship and traditionally symbolized God. In the modern context the word however, it has a more broad based definition and is used to attribute a sense of importance given to a person or an object that is an enduring symbol of adoration, aspiration and devotion. Given the popularity, size and reach of the Indian film industry, the Bollywood celebrities have the power to influence the attitude and behavior of millions of people, particularly the upwardly mobile youth in India. Films and TV are an integral part of the urban sub-culture in India, and its impact is seen in the behavioral adaptation pattern of lifestyle and fashion adoption of the various



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segments of urban Indians across all ages and economic segments (Vasan, 2010). Celebrities in India live a very public life, and many aspects of their lives are exposed to their fan following and the public in general. The godlike stature of Bollywood actors becomes even more evident from the fact that super stars like Amitabh Bachan and Rajnikanth have temples of worship dedicated to them (Dixit, 2005).

The role of Celebrity Endorsement: The glamour and fame of Bollywood plays an important role in influencing India's perception of luxury and is gradually contributing to the national culture. It is therefore important to recognize the influence of the Bollywood celebrity on the Indian consumer and culture through endorsement of Indian and International luxury brands (Financial Times, 2010). Celebrity endorsement is an important aspect of the value and consumer experience of most luxury and premium brands. Furthermore, when celebrities choose to endorse a brand it is seen as a reflection of their personal values (Bendell & Kleanthous, 2010). In their study "Psychological and cultural insights into consumptions of luxury Western brands" Eng and Bogaert (2010) argue that the Indian consumers' perceptions of luxury are susceptible to reference groups including Bollywood celebrities and sports personalities. According to the findings of their study, the perception of luxury is further reinforced by the social standing and recognition of this association leading to an enhanced brand experience of the product. Eng and Bogaert's study also establishes that Indian consumers of branded luxury merchandise exhibit collective behavior through reference groups such as Bollywood celebrities for representation and endorsement of luxury in terms of value and personal preferences.

Defining the Luxury Fashion Brand: Luxury brands trade in aspiration. Bernard and Laurent (1994, pg. 274) revealed several important themes emerge in relation to the concept of luxury, and include terms like "upscale", "quality", "good taste", "class", but also "flashiness" and "bad taste". All of these terms overlap in meaning to a certain extent but also have distinct connotations. For example, "upscale products also are naturally connected with material goods while the concept of luxury encapsulates symbolic and cultural values." Luxury merchandise is usually the highest-priced and highest-quality item in any product or service category and provides the consumer with an elite experience or sense of prestige (Bendell & Kleanthous, 2010). Watches, jewelry, high-specification interiors, high fashion apparels, exclusive resorts and top restaurants generally fall into the genre of luxury items. Even though luxury merchandise has utilitarian functions the pricing does not reflect its intrinsic cost or the added value it provides. More often than not the irrational pricing is justified by the merchandise's intangible value, uniqueness, creativity, quality and rarity (Dewey, 2009). Beverland's (2004) luxury brand model includes product integrity, value-driven emergence, culture, history, marketing and endorsement as the main qualifying criteria for luxury products and services.

The New Indian Luxury Consumer: The Indian Luxury consumer uses luxury and premium branded products as a symbol of success. The CII & AT Kearney India Luxury Review (2011) indicated that the Indian Luxury market is rapidly evolving and has witnessed a robust growth of 20% in the past year to reach a market size of USD 5.75 billion. It also reported that luxury consumption has moved from the primary metro cities of Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore to encompass Chennai, Pune, Hyderabad and Kolkata. Being a nation of young consumers 40% of the luxury consumers fall within the demographic age segment of 30 to 40 years, the first generation 'new rich', who are owners of small or medium size business enterprises. This group is well educated, aspirational and emulates role models in their lifestyles choices (Luxury Society Report, 2011). Many from this segment also belong to the growing Bollywood film fraternity, as sports and the film industry are also indicated areas of strong growth for personal wealth, apart from Pharmaceutical, metal, IT and service sectors. The definition of success and the way it is perceived by a peer group is changing worldwide and in India. Many successful people now want the brands they use to define their lifestyle choices and reflect their aspirations. However with luxury brands becoming more accessible, its appeal to consumers on the grounds of exclusivity is becoming more diluted. Hence, the added value for consumers is now derived from superior environmental and social performance, and context of the group of user and endorsers, specifically in the case of the 'new rich' segment of luxury consumers (Bendell & Kleanthous, 2010; Eng & Bogaert, 2010).

Research Method

Even though film personalities have endorsed varied products in India since the 1950's, celebrity endorsement of luxury and premium branded merchandise is a fairly recent phenomenon in the Indian market environment. With the opening up of the Indian economy in the 90s, the past decade has seen an overwhelming number of international brands across different segments enter the Indian market. The other positive spin off from the opening up of the economy is the growth of the affluence of the upper middle and the lower uppers segment of consumers, creating the potential for fashion and lifestyle brands to flourish as demands of changing lifestyles also grew (CII-AT Kearney, 2011). With the growing numbers of potential luxury consumers, luxury brands have had to relook at their product promotion and communication strategies, hence information available on record to determine a data base specific to the Indian luxury consumer that could be used for the current study was limited. Based on the paucity of information available it was decided that the research design to enable this study should therefore be exploratory in nature.

The advantage of an exploratory study is that it is flexible and adaptable to change. Saunders et al. (2003) mention while conducting an exploratory research one must be willing to change one's direction as a result of new data that appears, and new insights occur thereof. According to Adam and Schvaneveldt (1991) the flexibility inherent in exploratory research does not mean absence of direction to the enquiry, but allows the focus of a macro perspective to become progressively narrower as the research progresses.

The research for this paper has been based on the following:

Literature review: The first step in this research was the study of literature available through secondary sources namely books, journal, research documents, articles and reports. The review of literature and desk research was necessary to create the basis for the interviews and data collection, and to understand the background and context of the Indian Film Industry, the celebrity standing of Indian film actors and their role in the endorsement of fashion and lifestyle merchandise.

Observation: Location based semi-structured observation method was also used to understand the different types of customers who frequently visited luxury brand outlets for jewelry and watches. This method enabled the study to contextualize the luxury retail environment and touch point activities with regard to the customers/visitors to such outlets and the transactions that took place. It also gave an insight into different segments of shoppers that visited such outlets, the merchandise mix and presentation, retail environment and the luxury purchase/buying experience. Mack et al (2005) state, the observation method provides a depth and dimension to the exploratory research by uncovering factors which may hitherto be unknown or considered during the formulation of the research strategy. The method very often helped in substantiating information that may not be directly forthcoming in the findings of the other exploratory research tools.

Quantitative techniques: Data was also collected using questionnaires to understand the perception of customers toward the Celebrity endorsement. The questionnaire was designed to check the celebrity attractiveness, trustworthiness and expertise, as well as, customers' views about celebrity advertisement, their purchase intention and brand perception.

Sampling details: For the study the sample selection was from Delhi and NCR region and consisted of 150 respondents. All the respondents had purchased either branded luxury watches or/and jewelry in past one year. This criterion was necessary to measure their engagement with the brand and level of influence of the celebrity association of the luxury brand selected. The sampling technique used in the study is snowball sampling. This technique was used to help reach the segment of the population who are consumers/customers of Bollywood celebrity endorsed luxury merchandise; to study their behavior towards luxury watches and jewelry; and the effect of celebrity endorsement in the buying process (Zikmund, 2003). In the questionnaire, questions related to attitude towards the brand's advertisement; the buying process; intent to purchase the luxury product; celebrity expertise to endorse the brand were asked.

All the brands selected for the study all belong to the Gitanjali Gems Limited. This company pioneered the concept of branded jewelry in India and has a sizable market presence (50% of the organized precious jewelry market) in the country today dealing only in branded luxury watches and jewelry. Apart from this all the

brands belonging to this company are endorsed by Bollywood celebrities and target the different segments of the branded luxury jewelry and watch market.

Findings and Discussions

The literature review establishes that the reach and influence of the Bollywood film industry across all segments of the Indian society is fairly impactful. Bollywood super stars are an intrinsic part of the modern Indian lifestyle and are looked upon as demi-gods. Hence using Bollywood celebrities to endorse merchandise, specifically that, which is aspirational in nature, may be the ideal promotional strategy for premium and luxury product brands, especially precious jewelry and watches.

The luxury market in India is a strongly emerging market where the customer is relatively young, successful and rich. India has the second highest number of High Net Worth Individuals in Asia, most of who are between the age of 30 and 40. Interestingly the wealth of the Mumbai based luxury customers is 'older' (second generation) money as compared to New Delhi which has a higher concentration of 'New rich'. The new rich of the country are educated and well travelled, and are comfortable with the concept of luxury and premium brands and products. The market for luxury brands is evolving as is the new luxury consumer and the concept of luxury. With changing income levels, lifestyles and availability of merchandise the market environment is dynamic, requiring marketers to continuously explore levels of customer engagement in this segment, whilst maintaining the exclusivity of the merchandise.

Observations at the points of sale of the luxury branded jewelry showed the mix of customers was mainly the "new rich"; non-resident Indians; foreign nationals of Indian origin; well-to-do upwardly mobile customers from the tier two cities; and aspirational consumers. Of these the aspirational customers were mainly interested in the marked down merchandise, which was available in very limited quantity and variety and only for a few of the brands. The 'new rich' and tier two city customers on the other hand showed high conversion and purchase ability.

Based on the questionnaire research it is noted (Table 1) that for jewelry brands like Gili, Nakshatra, D'damas, Sangini, Asmi the impact of the celebrity endorser through the print and media promotion of the brand, because of their 'star' status in Bollywood, influenced the buying process of the brand's consumers and customers substantially. All these brands are endorsed by the current top five Bollywood actresses with a fan following primarily in the young adult to mature adult segments. However brands like Kashvi, Gdivas which are promoted by actors who are yet to gain in popularity in the industry, even though both have been winners of national beauty pageants and linked in their personal lives with leading sports personalities, were found to have a lesser influence as endorser. Strangely the brand Me Jewel, which has a younger target audience, was less influenced by the endorsing Bollywood celebrity compared to others despite the fact that the celebrity is currently the reigning diva of Bollywood. This could be attributed to the fact that the actress is now in her early thirties and has moved on to playing more adult roles. Menz, which is a menswear jewelry brand also, had a low impact on the buying decision of the customer by the Bollywood endorser. Once again the brand endorser for this is not a leading Bollywood actor even though he has been one of India's leading male models. Indicating a possibility that the star standing of the endorser does directly impact the popularity of the brand; and the glamour and high end luxurious lifestyle associated with successful film actors makes their lifestyle product choices aspirational and iconic. This is further substantiated by the fact that non Indian brands like Tag Heuer and Longines⁴⁹ are strongly influenced by the star standing of the brand's endorsers as an aspirational luxury product purchase. Of all the brands explored Envi, which deals in high end emerald jewelry was least influenced by the endorser, suggesting that for extreme niche category jewelry the influences and iconic value of the endorser does not matter much.

49 These brands were not a part of the sample study of the questionnaire but observed as a part of the merchandise mix of the MBO points of sales of the luxury brand stores visited.

Table 1: Details of Attitude of consumers towards brand's advertisement based on the kind of Bollywood endorser used

Attitude towards brand's advertisement	Interesting	Creative	Informative	Influencing	Entertaining
Gili	28.5%	10.2%	10.3%	37.3%	13.7%
Nakshatra	28.3%	12.2%	11.2%	36.3%	12%
D'dams	23.3%	15.5%	12.3%	34.4%	14.5%
Sagini	23.3%	28.3%	20.2%	33.2%	15.2%
Asmi	18.9%	23.4%	24.4%	32.5%	0.8%
Kashvi	22.2%	31.2%	8.3%	23%	15.3%
Me Jewel	25.4%	23.5%	9.3%	19.3%	22.5%
Gdivas	15.5%	22.2%	24.6%	27.3%	10.4%
Menz	17.7%	21.3%	22.3%	12.3%	26.4%
Envi	21.3%	16.3%	23.4%	15%	24%
Morellato	22.3%	25.4%	13%	16.3%	23%

The second aspect of the questionnaire research (Table 2) which looked at the effect of the brand's endorser on the buying behavior and buying process, indicated for brands like Gili and Nakshatra the purchase of brand based on endorser, is high and medium. The Brand Sangini is occasion wear precious jewelry and is positioned as a product ideal for special/landmark occasion gifting. The consumers of this brand purchase it as a gift to express the love and affection towards their partners. The effect of the endorsers for this brand is low to medium. This may be attributed to the fact that the primary position message of the product is not related to lifestyle, but leans more towards personal relationships and an expression of affection and love. Therefore the consumers feel that their purchase decision to buy jewelry (for expressing love and affection) based on the endorser in the advertisement is not very relevant. Again it was noted that the menswear jewelry brands were least affected by the endorsers.

Table 2: Based on Consumer Feedback: the effect on buying behavior

Consumer Buying process	Informative	Selecting Alternatives	Purchase based on Endorser	Post Purchase intention
Gili	Medium	High on choice	High	Medium
Nakshatra	Medium	Low to Medium on Choice	Medium	Medium
D'damas	High	High on Choice	High to Medium	Medium
Sagini	Medium	Low to Medium on Choice	Low to Medium	Low
Asmi	Medium	Low to Medium on Choice	Medium	Medium
Kashvi	Low to Medium	Medium to high on Choice	Medium	Medium
Me Jewel	High	High to medium on Choice	High to medium	Medium
Gdivas	Medium	Medium on choice	High to medium	Medium
Menz	Low	Low to medium on Choice	Low	Low to Medium
Envi	Medium	Low to Medium	Low to medium	Medium
Morellato	Medium	Low to Medium	Low	Medium

The questionnaire was also used to understand the effect of the chosen celebrity endorser on representation of the brand in term of product-endorser match (Table 3). D'damas, Asmi and Nakshatra were found to have high celebrity endorsement influence in the purchase decision of the buyers in comparison to the other brands studied. However as discussed above, brand Envi purchasers felt that the product endorsement

match between the actress and product did not work as the target audience of the brand had outgrown the endorser and hence the experiential value of the brand was not that of 'sharing' or 'emulating' but more of 'being told about the product'. Most of the respondents felt they could not identify the actress with the brand. The choice of the actor to endorse the watch brand 'Morellato' was also found to be a 'mis-match', even though the actor has a fairly good fan following. Most the respondents felt that the persona of the endorser did not match the product and that it was difficult to visualize the actor using the product in real life. Many felt the actor is young and has a 'boy next door' image and also endorses numerous mass segment brands, hence the recall value on his new luxury image created a certain dissonance.

Table 3: Based on consumer feedback: The effect of celebrity Endorsement

Celebrity Expertise to endorse the brand	Celebrity Endorser	Celebrity is a perfect match	Celebrity depicts the personality of the brand	Celebrity is influencing
Gili	Bipasha Basu	Natural	Medium	Medium
Nakshatra	Katrina Kaif	High	High	High
D'damas	Sonakshi Sinha	High	High	High
Sangini	Kareena Kapoor and Salman Khan	Low	Medium to low	Low
Asmi	Priyanka Chopra	Neutral	High	High
Kashvi	Mahima Choudhary	Low	Neutral	Medium
Me Jewel	Kareena Kapoor	Low	Low	Medium
Gdivas	Neha Dhupia	Low	Medium	Low
Menz	Dino Morea	Low	Low	Low
Envi	Sonakshi Sinha	Neutral	High	Low
Morellato	Neel Nithin Mukesh	Medium	Low	Low

Conclusion

This paper has explored the influence of Bollywood branding on the new rich and traditional Indian luxury consumers for branded fashion jewelry and watches and tried to understand the effect of celebrity endorsement on the value perception of this segment. In conclusion the study has resolved that celebrity endorsement by Bollywood actors does affect the consumer buying decision process for luxury and premium branded jewelry and watches based on current standing of the star and his popularity.

It is important to note however that the Indian consumer of the luxury and premium brands is still evolving, as is the market. The concept of conspicuous consumption amongst the upwardly mobile new rich in terms of lifestyle products and its social and status based impact goes a long way influencing purchase decisions and the brand experience. Thus the use of celebrities, in particular film personalities, who are a high visibility group with very public 'personal' lives, becomes an important part of that experience. A point to be noted, however, is as this market segment matures and evolves and the newness of luxury experience becomes a way of life the selection of the celebrity to endorse the product and the brand communication that the celebrity represents will have to be addressed to ensure the right match. This was already apparent in some of the brands that were a part of this study.

The primary focus of this study was limited to brands of Indian origin or collaboration and not the international fashion luxury brands, thus the subject needs to be explored further as this market segment has huge potential to grow in the future.

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Building a Brand | Designing New Icons

• How business builds the image of an icon or becomes an icon itself.

III.

*Revealing design patterns from iconic fashion logos;
an analysis revealing the design patterns of 130 iconic fashion logos*

Jean-Casimir Morreau

Amsterdam Fashion Institute, Netherlands

An exploratory study of Iconic fashion brand collaborations: The importance of fit

Karina Nobbs, Maartje van Mensvoort, Patsy Perry, & Matteo Montecchi

London College of Fashion, United Kingdom

Fashion PR agencies in a network of mediation

Kim Bruggeman Amsterdam Fashion Institute, Netherlands

Sudha'68 A New Brand for Artists and Designers

Sasikumar Kanniyappan Pearl Academy of Fashion, India

Belief in Burberry: How a Fashion Business Reinvents its Iconic Status

Dr. Inga Bryden, Dr. Savithri Bartlett (with Dr. David Birks) The University of Winchester, United Kingdom

Brands and Icons: Beyond Metro Boundries

Vandana Narang National Institute of Fashion Technology, India

Revealing design patterns from iconic fashion logos; an analysis revealing the design patterns of 130 iconic fashion logos

Jean-Casimir Morreau Amsterdam Fashion Institute, Netherlands

Abstract



Jean-Casimir Morreau

"Highly skilled visual & interactive designer, with more than 10 years of experience"

Teaching part-time for 7 years on concept and strategy for fashion brands, main focus online branding, and the design of new visual identities. Furthermore designing new educational programs and promotion for AMFI-Amsterdam Fashion Institute.

Next to teaching, I run Studio Morreau, a multidisciplinary design-agency, focus on visual simplicity, planned conceptual work, with an eye on the user.

Why do logos look similar across the fashion industry? What are the defining characteristics of these logos that make them look and feel authentic & fashionable? This paper examines the recurring elements of iconic fashion logos, revealing the components that form an archetypical fashion brand logo. Inevitably proving that such characteristics are used frequently and can act as the design basis for new fashion logos. A large repository of 130 iconic, industry-leading, fashion logos were collected and analysed based on numerous recurring characteristics, resulting in the discovery of multiple visual elements distinctive for iconic fashion logos. Five of the most common visual elements include; *Founder name*, *Monogram*, *Founding location*, *Uppercase typography* and the *Color black*.

Based on thorough research, this study proposes five '*design patterns*' which designers and brand managers can choose to adhere to or reject when designing 'new' fashion logos.

1. Introduction

The logo is of pivotal importance, especially within the fashion industry. Clothing brand logos are a major source of revenue (Cohen, 1989), and according to Park and Roedder (2011) women who carry a bag with a prominently printed Victoria's Secret logo on it perceive themselves as more feminine, glamorous and attractive than those who carry a similar shopping bag without a logo. Therefore, logos are vastly important for the success of branding. The area of similarities within logo design has undergone little quantitative research, which is remarkable considering the importance of logos. One reason could be the common understanding that logos are unique, based on their relation to identity and trademarks. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that logos look similar across the fashion industry (figure 1.1). What are these similarities, and what are the defining characteristics of these logos that make them authentic and fashionable?



Figure 1.1 – archetypical luxury and fashion logos with uppercase typography, founding location and monogram symbols.

Most literature that discusses logo design is either historical (Mollerup, 1997; English, 2000) or based on a subjective selection of taste (Carter, 1983; Klanten, 2003; Wiedemann, 2006). Anecdotal evidence suggests that patterns of similarity and imitation make for stronger category and product recognition and, subsequently, that a unique logo is a design myth. Schmitt and Simonson (1997) suggest that analysing the logos of competitors can reveal logo design strategies, whilst other authors have looked at recurring elements based on quantitative criteria for logo design (Bowie, 2005; Evamy, 2007; Healey, 2010). Bowie (2005), a sociologist, conducted research on 750,000 graphical trademarks filed at the United States

Keywords: logo, visual identity, fashion logo, graphic design, branding.

Patent Office. Evidence suggested that organizations imitated the symbols employed by other organizations within the same industry. These recurring elements can be traced back to a wide array of product categories and historical trends, which unveils specific design trends amongst a multitude of trademarks. However the research of recurring elements in logo design has mainly focused on extensive product categories, or specific grouping of graphical elements (Bowie, 2005; Evamy, 2007; Healey, 2010). From the perspective of the fashion industry, the conclusions lack sufficient detail in order to gain understanding or apply this to specific (new) logo design within the fashion industry.

The aim of this research paper is to answer the following question: *Are there recurring patterns amongst iconic fashion logos, if so, how can these patterns be identified and influence the design of new fashion logos?* This research paper has two specific objectives:

1. To identify and create a classification scheme for recurring patterns in fashion logos
2. To propose a design pattern template for these recurring patterns

This paper proposes the introduction of a specific pattern language for the future of fashion logo design. Therefore, it is important to note that this is an exploratory study, limited to the data obtained after the analysis of 130 iconic fashion brand logos (see Appendix A for the selection of fashion brands). The findings are expected to give further insight into fashion logo design, in the hope to assist designers develop new, successful logos by proposing numerous design starting points. Whilst also creating awareness of time-tested solutions for logo design within the fashion and luxury industry, which can either be abided by or deviated from.

The paper is divided into four parts. The first chapter reviews literature relevant to logo design and design patterns. The second presents the research methodology, motivates the selection of 130 logos and discusses the data analysis techniques. After which the findings of the study is presented. The paper concludes with a discussion of design and strategy implications and possible directions for further research.

2. Literature Review: Logos and design patterns

In the following sections the term 'logo' and its respective function will be examined, the concept of design patterns will be introduced and how it relates to logo design, specifically fashion logo design.

2.1 Defining a logo

There has always been a need for the identification of people, products, services and organizations (Mollerup, 1997). From the crests on shields of warlords to a potter's signature on crockery; logos have existed for thousands of years. The logo can be considered the starting point and epicenter of brand identity. Furthermore; from this one can derive the use of color, typographic elements and graphical representations for a complete brand identity.

Often when discussing logos there is confusion regarding the terminology used: the word 'logo' stems from the word *logotype*, however, the terms 'symbol', 'mark', 'brand mark', 'identifier', 'logotype', and 'trademark' are often used interchangeably. Therefore, the terminology requires clarification; there are three important parts that shape the image of a company: the *brand*, its *identity* and the *logo* (Landa, 2011).

According to Neumeier (2005) "the brand is a person's gut feeling about a product, service or company". It is the perceived image of a company as a whole. The identity (also referred to as visual identity), often mistakenly interchanged with the logo -- encompasses the whole spectrum of all visible and tangible elements (e.g. logo, colors, retail, packaging, transport, website, etc) used to create a brand -- Even audio, smell and animation can play a part in this identity. Lastly, the logo functions as the prime identifier of a brand (Olins, 2008; Landa, 2011): it is a sign or icon used to symbolize an organization, service or product. It is a unique symbol, which identifies the company in essence. The purpose of a logo is to be an entry point to the core ideas of the organization. Milton Glaser, iconic graphic designer, famous for his I♥NY logo, defines the logo as follows:

[. . .] a logo is either a series of words or an image that attempts to represent an institution or an individual in a way that is symbolic in some cases or parallels the person's identity... what logos attempt to do is synthesize an individual or institution into an understandable visual form. (Hardy, 2011:18)

There are three kinds of logos: text only, text with symbol, and symbol only. A logo can be broken up into multiple parts. Wheeler (2009), a brand consultant, makes a distinction between the logotype and the brand mark: the logotype is essentially the brand name set in a specific typography, when combined with the brand mark (a symbol or icon), and/or tagline it becomes the signature of the brand (Figure 1.2). In the context of this paper the term 'logo', describing the combination of logotype, brandmark and – if applicable – a tagline, will be used.

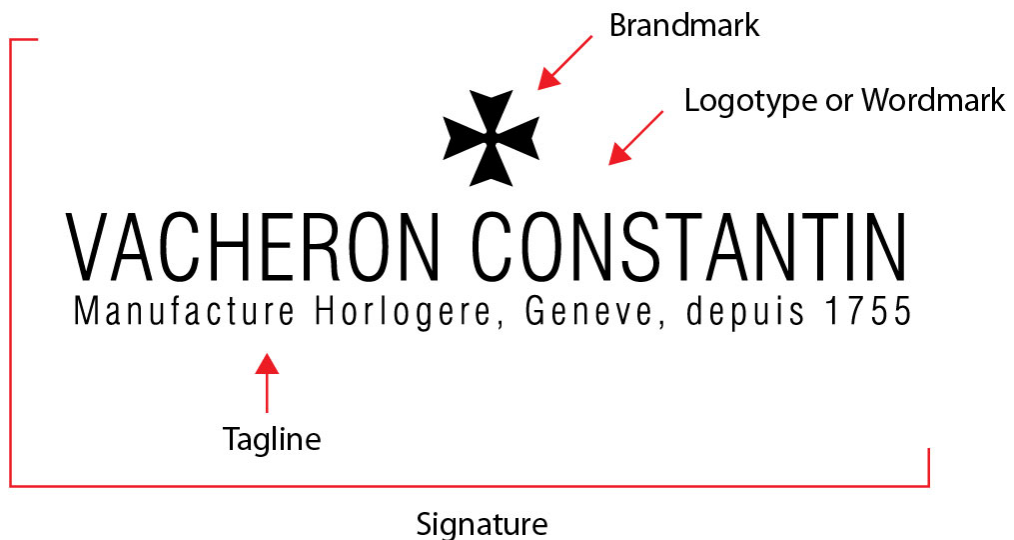


Figure 1.2 – The elements of a logo/signature as proposed by Wheeler

2.2. The function of a logo

The main function of a logo is identification, which happens through the use of symbols. Recognition and meaning are inherent in the symbols and forms used. Wheeler (2009) and 'identity consultant' Spaeth (1997) argue that well-designed logos should have simple, specific and concise characteristics in order to judge the logos' qualities in comparison to other competitors. Currently there is a discussion in the field of graphic design, questioning whether the days are numbered for the simple, static logos due to the increasingly digital nature of branding across multiple mediums (Stones, 2009; Fastcodesign, 2010; Nes 2012).

Based on the fact that fashion logos are traditionally orientated, which will be discussed in section 2.8 'fashion logos', the traditional agreement on the characteristics of logo effectiveness (Spaeth, 1997; English, 2000; Wheeler, 2009) within design literature, is the most appropriate. According to Spaeth (1997) there are six characteristics of logo effectiveness. A logo needs to be;

1. *Distinctive*, in its own category
2. *Practical*, it can function from big to small, in color and black and white
3. *Graphic*, it needs to work in the visual center of the brain without interpretation (e.g. the M of McDonalds is seen as a form instead of a letter)
4. *Simple*, in form the logo contains only one essential idea (e.g. the swoosh of Nike does not compete with the word Nike)
5. *One message*, the logo only contains the pure positioning of the brand (e.g. luxury, heritage, speed)
6. *Appropriate*, the design needs to fit the target group and its positioning

It is important to note that all of these methods of logo effectiveness show there is no objective system for logo evaluation or comparison; they are all based on experience and opinion.

2.3 Design patterns

In the previous two sections the term 'logo' and its respective function were examined. In this section the focus lies on design patterns and the subsequent relationship with logo design. 'Design patterns' are generally known as time-tested solutions to a specific recurring design problem within a given context. However, the design pattern does not solve the problem directly; as it is rather a template that one can choose to use to solve the problem.

Originally 'patterns' came from the field of architecture: it was architect Christopher Alexander who coined the term in his book *A Pattern Language*, published in 1977. There he suggested patterns to be used over and over again in design solutions for specific architectural problems. In the following years software engineering, interactive design, and even education (pedagogical patterns) have adopted this approach. Design patterns can, therefore, be seen as starting points for time-tested approaches to design problems. They provide a common language amongst professionals, but also function as testing devices for further development, or are used as anti-patterns to demonstrate the common design strategies used in specific industries. Acquiring that knowledge allows the brand to distinguish itself from the crowd by choosing a different design pattern to its competitors.

To design any kind of creative solution, an idea should not be imposed onto the problem, but the problem should instead dictate the solutions. A systematical approach to a creative process is often considered controversial, especially in the creative industry. The use of templates, stock material or any other starting method is generally frowned upon. Over the years, most designers have often subconsciously created their own 'design patterns' based upon experience and non-articulated principles. Although this method may differentiate them, their reliability and representation within a broad industry has been questioned.

2.5 Earlier research into patterns within logo design

In logo design publications it is common practice to divide logos into categories based on their most significant visual characteristics (Klanten, 2003; Evamy, 2007; Healey, 2010;). For example Evamy (2007) uses, 'Square Symbols', 'Symbols Containing Trees', and 'Overlapping Type'. While there are many different classification systems, nearly all of these systems use common patterns that make logos definable in groups of visual characteristics. As stated in the introduction; Bowie (2005) has done extensive research into recurring patterns amongst differing trademarks, and Stahle (2002) coded the logos of 200 top American brands based on specific characteristics, Lee (1992) examined the visual identities of 200 universities in the United States. All of these studies show the enduring design trends intertwined amongst similar industries.

2.6 Structure of design patterns

Design patterns are generally displayed as a template, this makes it easier to understand the design problem, the context and the suggested solutions, but also how these elements fit together. Gamma's (1995) suggested the use of a template system for usability and comparability. Furthermore, an organized collection of patterns for a specific discipline is called a 'pattern language' (Alexander 1979). This research paper can be used as the starting point for a 'pattern language' specifically tailored to the design of fashion logos. Chapter 4 of this paper describes five common design characteristics of iconic fashion logos, and in Appendix B these five characteristics are set in a modified version of the design pattern template suggested by Gamma (1995).

Term	Description
Pattern Name	Describes the essence of the pattern in a short, but expressive, name
Intent	Describes what the pattern does
Synonyms	List any synonyms for the pattern
Motivation	Provides an example of a problem and how the pattern solves that problem
Participants	A listing of the objects used in the pattern and their roles in the design.
Consequences	The consequences of using this design pattern
Implementation	A description of implementing the pattern

Table 1.1 – Design pattern templates as proposed by Gamma

2.7 Fashion logos

In the previous sections pattern templates and its uses were discussed and a specific template was introduced for designing fashion logos. This section will delve into the recurring elements of fashion logos.

Even though many brands outside the fashion industry change their logos subtly or radically over time, and customers appreciate this modern approach (Müller, et al., 2013), the fashion industry is one of tradition and heritage: Therefore iconic fashion brands remain extremely loyal to their original logos and are very careful when changing their identities. They have to stay close to the original founders and ideas because that is the foundation the brand is built on. Especially considering most customers rely on brand name because it is difficult for a customer to measure the quality of fashion products. According to the research conducted, almost all (86%, see Appendix A) of all iconic fashion brands use the name of their founder as the brand name and logotype.

A relevant example that demonstrates the importance of this brand loyalty is the recent public and media outcry relating to the name change of *Yves Saint Laurent* to *Saint Laurent* (Business of Fashion, 2012), and the logo redesign of GAP (Guardian, 2010). Which both exemplify how difficult it is to change an element of a brands core identity, that consumers know and trust. Long standing brands within the fashion industry therefore seldom change their core identity in comparison to other industries, IBM (fig 1.3) is a classic example.

The logos of Louis Vuitton, of which the original logo was designed in 1897, and Chanel remain almost unchanged in 2012. Even the logos of: Fendi, Gucci, Valentino and Yves Saint Laurent, all designed in the 1960's, remain almost unchanged. Therefore, in respect to this research paper, it can be stated that fashion logos remain almost untouched over time and encompass numerous similarities amongst one another.

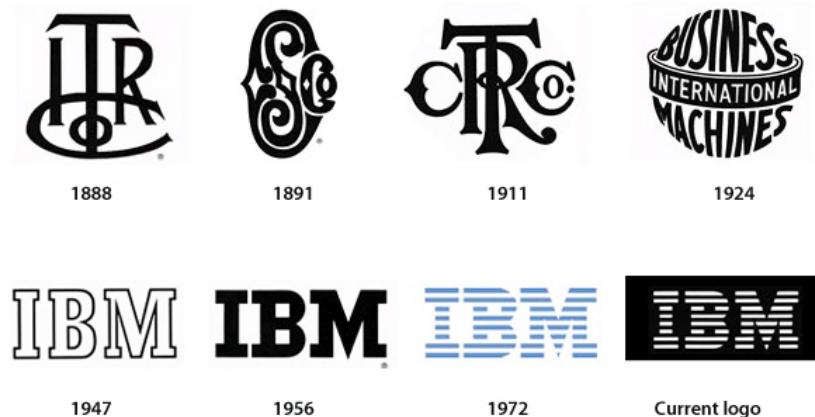


Figure 1.3 – IBM logo evolution of IBM from 1888 to 2012

2.8 Summary

From the literature review, we can conclude that logos must be simple, speak one language and their main purpose is identification. There are, however, recurring design problems within a given context and it is, therefore, possible to use time-tested design solutions to recognize the patterns within these solutions.

Even with the help of design patterns, there is plenty of room for experimentation and creative intuition. It gives the designer a time-tested head start and relevant criteria to work with. It is up to the designer to either follow the recommendations or deviate from them as they see fit. Logo designs within the fashion industry will always be similar.

3. Method: analysing 130 fashion brand logos

The following section explains why and how 130 fashion brand logos were selected and compiled, the data gathering process and how it was analyzed.

3.1 Research sampling and data collection

This paper consists of a qualitative analysis of the most iconic fashion logos, based on their common characteristics. The object of study is a large and representative repository of 130 industry leading iconic fashion and luxury logos (see Appendix A). The compilation of this list is determined by two phases. First, the initial list, compiled between August and November 2012, combined several up-to-date 'end of year' lists from industry acknowledged sources (Interbrand, L2 thinktank, Time magazine and Polyvore). The reason therefore is that lists like 'Digital IQ Index Fashion 2011' and 'Best Retail Brands 2012' give a non-biased and industry acknowledged selection of current iconic fashion and luxury brands, because their lists are selections of large business-based and consumer-based criteria.

This created a list of 260 brands, next all the duplicates were taken out, after which a computer-generated random list of a 130 logos (half of the original list) remained. This served as the sampling frame, these logos are thus non-biased and without pre-determination (see Appendix A for the complete list), it is important to note that this method makes for a honest overview, without cherry picking logos with the same design characteristics.

3.2 Selection Guidelines

After collecting the logos they were all made free standing and checked with the brand websites and/or social media accounts to see if they were still current. As seen in section 2.2, there is no objective system for logo comparison, thus the list of characteristics was based on subjective criteria proposed by English (2002) and Wheeler (2009) and on the basis of most recurring elements. A group of four participants were each given 20 fashion logos from the list to judge based on these criteria, from the group discussion the following characteristics were finalized into the list:

- Color (Black, White, Gold, etc)
- Founder Name
- Founding date
- Icon
 - Animal/Nature
 - Monogram
 - Object
- Location (Paris, London, Milan, etc)
- Typography
 - Uppercase
 - Serif
 - Sans-Serif
 - Script

The logos were then tagged, on the basis of these characteristics. In Appendix A there is an overview of the logos and tagged characteristics. In order to see if the design characteristic of the fashion logo is a valid design pattern it must be common to at least half of the sampling frame, or within a smaller sampling frame with the same logo characteristics: For example monograms only occur in 49% of the 130 logos, however not all brands use icons, if the 87 brands are taken that use an icon in its logo, the occurrence is 74%. Finally, the highest occurrences of logos exhibiting each type of design characteristic were calculated, and these common design patterns are discussed in the following section.



Figure 1.4 – Screenshot of Appendix A

4. Results: Five design patterns for fashion logos

The following section starts by examining the results obtained after comparing logos and moves onto establishing the five most distinctive patterns based on highest occurrence.

4.1 Results of comparison

In the list of 130 logos, recurring visual elements have been identified that represent and make up quintessential iconic fashion logos. The visual elements: monograms, founder names, location names, color black, and uppercase typography are the most apparent design trends among the researched fashion logos. In the table below you can see a side comparison of the five specific patterns found in the 130 logos (see Figure 1.5 for a graphical representation).

VISUAL ELEMENT	Color black	Founder name	Uppercase	Monogram	Location
PERCENTAGES	88%	86%	75%	49%	43%
LOGOS	115/130	112/130	97/130	64/130	57/130

Table 1.2 – Visual patterns found in 130 fashion and luxury logos

Results show that the most frequently observed patterns are the use of black, the name of the founder and uppercase typography; all of these patterns have a significant occurrence. A monogram as the brand icon, and the inclusion of the location also frequently occurs.



Figure 1.5 – The five most recurring elements in the iconic Chanel logo

4.1 Design pattern: Color black

The results show that 115 out of the 130 brands (88%), use black as their primary color, the color black is the most frequent ‘design-pattern’ from this data set. The historian Pastoureau (2009), argues that black historically was associated with danger and hell, but also with fertility and monastic virtue. However, in the last century it has become the iconic color of modernity for designers. One probable reason black is so often used in the fashion industry, is that fashion changes and moves with color all the time, meaning it is not without risk to attach your permanent visual identity to a specific color. Secondary colors however are not so static and can be slightly changed with time and season. Even in terms of secondary colors, brands show similarity; opting for gold, silver or pastels in the luxury category. In the high street, the brands use two primary colors, red & blue (Figure 1.6). After shape, color is the strongest factor in visual identity (Wheeler 2009). In contrast to the fashion industry most other industries strongly make use of color, by using black a fashion brand has to find other ways to stand out. (See Appendix B Design Pattern Color Black)

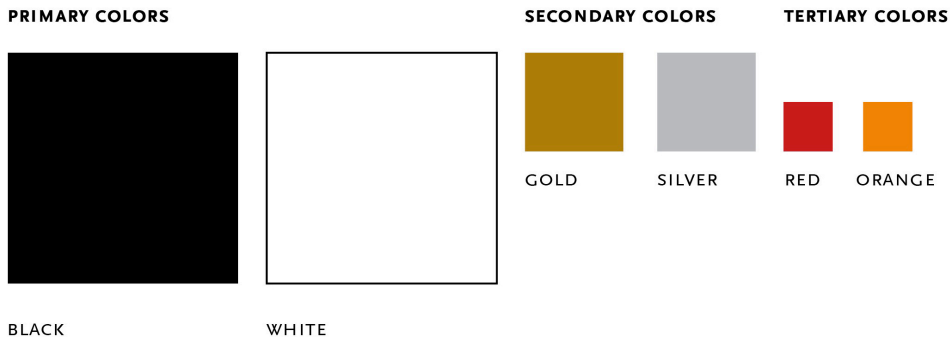


Figure 1.6 – primary, secondary and tertiary colors mostly used in the data set

4.2 Design pattern: Founder name

Almost all brands from the data set use the founder's name (or occasionally a made up name) as the base of their brand name (Figure 1.7): 112 of the 130 brands (86%). The founder name generates authenticity and connection to an individual. An individual visionary designer traditionally starts a fashion company. Customers would associate the fashion with the individual designer. Nowadays, fashion brands such as; Elizabeth & James and Miss Selfridge, give the impression of a 'real' person although they have nothing to do with the designer or founder's name. Creating a new brand name is possibly one of the hardest things to do in branding, using the founders name makes the strongest connection to an individual, it satisfies an ego and is easy to protect (Wheeler 2009). However, with the likes of Martha Stewart and John Galliano, attaching your brand to an individual can have high risks for the brand. (See Appendix B Design Pattern Founder Name)

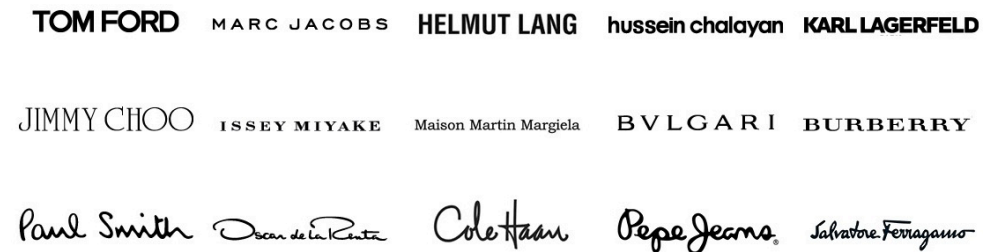


Figure 1.7 – 15 founder names

4.3 Design pattern: Monogram

	Percentage of All Logos	Percentage of Logos That Use Icons
Monogram	47%	74%

The results show that 61 out of the 130 brands (47%), use a monogram as a brand mark or icon (Figure 1.8). A monogram is always unique and relates strongly to the founder's name. In fashion it is frequently used as a pattern on textiles, and accessories, or woven into clothing. Over time it also functions as a strong mnemonic device (e.g. double c of Chanel), through which a customer recognizes the brand at a glance (Wheeler, 2009).

The first monogram to be enforced by royal edict on a product was French Sevres porcelain in 1752 when King Louis XV gave them monopoly over porcelain production (Adams, 2006), this set the future for marking your products. The son of Louis Vuitton designed the now famous LV in 1897 for the inner lining of the products (Tungate, 2012), later it became the outside hallmark of the brand. Okonkwo (2007) states that “..initials as a logo should only be made by a brand after achieving extensive global awareness and appeal” it takes decades to have people recognize a brand with a specific letterform, and you have to infuse it with meaning through advertising. (see Appendix B Design Pattern Monogram)

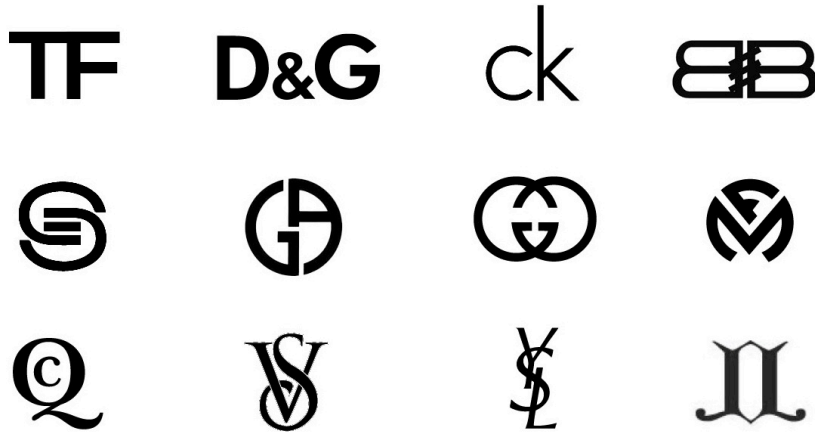


Figure 1.8 – From Left to right; Tom Ford, Dolce&Gabbana, Calvin Klein, Balenciaga, Ellie Saab, Giorgio Armani, Gucci, Franck Muller, Alexander McQueen, Victoria Secret, Yves Saint Laurent, John Lobb.

4.4 Design pattern: Location

	Percentage of All Logos	Percentage of Logos That Use Taglines
Location	43%	86%

Some 55 of the 130 brands (43%) use a form of location in their logos, the most common being a city name: Paris, London, New York, and Milan (figure 1.9). Using the location as a final element in the logo with the other design elements creates a triangle; person, time, and place. These together, create the feeling of authenticity and heritage. In particular the word *Paris* underneath a brand is a clear indicator that we are dealing with a fashion brand, because of its close historical relation to the fashion industry. Watch brands mostly opt for the country (e.g. Swiss, Switzerland), and some brands even use a form of location in their brand names (e.g. Rue 21, L’Occitane en Provence, Bottega Veneta). (See Appendix B Design Pattern Location)



Figure 1.9 – 15 brands with city names as their location marker

4.5 Design pattern: Uppercase Typography

Some 96 out of a 130 logos (75%) use uppercase typography for the design of their logotype. Many fashion brands only use their name as their logo; in those circumstances it is vitally important to incorporate distinct and recognizable typography. It allows the logo to function as a single entity (Figure 1.9). Uppercase letters are very uniform in width and shape, when set together they tend to form a rectangle and create a coherent shape. The term uppercase (also known as capitals) is derived from the days of metal type where the lesser used capital letters were kept in the harder to reach upper case while the more frequently used letters were kept in the lower case. The Romans used capitals for imperial inscriptions, and are considered more formal and serious (Samara, 2006). Lowercase letters are perceived as more relaxed and casual. (See Appendix B Design Pattern Uppercase Typography)



Figure 2 – 16 brands with recurring uppercase typography.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

According to my research, this is the first study to showcase common patterns used amongst fashion logos. The devised method can be translated into smaller sampling frames and also be applied to real-life situations by brand managers and designers. They are now able to analyze competitor's logos, observe recurring patterns, and use the acquired information to either follow or deviate from the design trend.

From a practical perspective, this research provides useful guidelines for design. The research suggests that it is possible to have creative starting points when designing new logos for fashion brands, and use time-tested methods, employed in the fashion industry, like: Color black, Uppercase typography, Founder name, Monograms and Location.

One important limitation of this study, which must be considered, is the fact that it has been conducted with a limited set of data. The analysis is done by interpretation and a further study would benefit from a larger set of data and a mechanism capable of identifying patterns by computer or a larger group of people. Another limitation of this research is that the logos are not analyzed on their success, only on the fact they were included in the 'end-of-year' list. Further investigation into the correlation between logo design patterns and their success and if these design patterns make for better logo design could prove to be essential.

This study can be replicated within other sectors of the fashion industry (e.g. high-street brands, jeans brands, country specific brands, etc) in order to further extend current knowledge of the design patterns, but also to assess whether logos within specific sectors are similar to one another.

In conclusion, this paper aims to lay down the foundations for a pattern language tailored specifically to fashion logo design. Future studies would require providing further insight to the specific effectiveness of each individual design pattern.

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An exploratory study of Iconic fashion brand collaborations: The importance of fit

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Abstract

'Fashion collaborations leverage entire fashion business concepts that transform their branding strategy into not only "sleeping with the enemies", but also to "talking to strangers", regardless of product type' (Ahn et al. 2010, p.6). Design collaborations appear to be a strategic marketing tool for fashion brands to generate sales and reach a wider group of consumers (WSGN 2012, Tungate 2012, Fashionsolution, 2011). Within the last decade the most well known and successful collaborations have been introduced by H&M who have collaborated with Karl Lagerfeld (Chanel), Stella McCartney, Lanvin, Cavalli, Victor & Rolf, Versace and Marni, Other retailers like Target, C&A, Debenhams and Steps have also operated this strategic approach to collaboration. The aim of this exploratory study is to investigate this phenomenon in order to understand the form and function of collaborations within the fashion sector. Specifically the concept of fit will be considered as a critical success factor.

There is a strong rationale for this study in that there is a lack of both conceptual and empirical academic research in this field. Some of the key drivers of this business trend are that fashion collaborations enable the democratisation of fashion which refers to the idea that high fashion becomes more accessible and affordable for mass market (Tungate, 2008; Jackson and Shaw, 2009, WWD 2010). Furthermore, there are commercial reasons to collaborate as when two brands work together they make use of each other's brand strengths to gain mutual advantages, In general, strategic expansion, sharing managerial, financial and technical risks and knowledge are the most important reasons for companies to work together (Whipple and Gentry 2000, Wigley and Provelengiou, 2010). This study adopts a mixed method approach using qualitative interviews and questionnaires to investigate the trend from both a consumer and a industry perspective.

Introduction

The success of fashion brand collaborations is what creates their iconic status (Business of Fashion 2012, Fashionista 2012). From Halston for JC Penny in 1983, Karl Lagerfeld for H&M in 2004 and Missoni for Target in 2011, the specialised marketing mix strategy of these 'high-low' collaborations is an under researched field. Not every collaboration is successful, and failure can often be attributed to a poor match-up of the collaborative partners (Chun and Niehm, 2010). Therefore, the overall aim of this study is to identify the critical success factors of fashion collaborations. Specifically the research objectives are: i) to gain a deeper understanding of the importance of fit within a fashion collaboration; ii) to evaluate what role the different brand images of a luxury fashion brand and high-street retailer play regarding the overall attitude towards the fashion collaboration; and iii) to investigate the difference in brand image levels of the fashion collaboration in comparison to the initial parent brand. As previously stated there is a lack of empirical research which considers the importance of fit in the field of co-branding and especially within a fashion context. This is despite this strategy being adopted often within this sector. The small number of existing studies focus on co-branding between two products from different industries, typically one fashion and one non-fashion company (i.e. Prada and LG) (Ahn et al. 2010; Chun and Niehm, 2010; Ahn and Sung, 2012).. These papers investigate factors that influence the degree of fit, instead of exploring the outcome of this match-up / collaboration from a consumer perspective, which this study will contribute.



Karinna Nobbs

Karinna has a passion for the aesthetic aspects of fashion, and was a visual merchandiser by trade before entering academia in 2001. She worked for United Colours of Benetton, Kookai, Xile Clothing, House of Fraser and Ralph Lauren in the fields of fashion retail, PR, visual merchandising and buying. Karinna went on to work as a Lecturer in International Fashion Branding at Glasgow Caledonian University for ten years. In this time she developed her research and consultancy experience in the areas of luxury brand management, integrated marketing communication and fast fashion. In the last three years she has taken an interest in social media marketing and is also now undertaking a PhD in visual brand management at London College of Fashion

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Literature Review

'Fashion collaborations leverage entire fashion business concepts that transform their branding strategy into not only "sleeping with the enemies", but also to "talking to strangers", regardless of product type' (Ahn et al. 2010, p.6). A fashion collaboration strategy contains dual branding, ingredient branding, product bundling, co-branding or co-marketing alliance (Ahn et al. 2010; Ahn and Sung, 2012). Most common fashion collaborations are between luxury brands and casual wear such as H&M who set up a temporary collection with luxury brands such as Versace, Marni and Stella McCartney (Chun and Niehm, 2010). Therefore, this study focuses on fashion collaborations between luxury fashion brands and high-street retailers, or co-branding, as this has become a popular branding strategy with a yearly increase by 20% during the last decade (Monga and Lau-Gesk, 2007).

Co-branding often has a temporary character and adopts 'the pairing of two or more branded products to form a separate and unique product' (Washburn et al. 2000, p.591). In literature, many different terms are used for co-branding; joint marketing, comarketing, joint branding, strategic alliance, brand alliance and so on (Ahn and Sung, 2012; Simonin and Ruth, 1998; Park et al. 1996). In the current study the term cobranding is used *in situations where two or more companies' brand alliance strategy is simultaneously presented and the temporary relationship between all parties is highly visible to consumers in order to reinforce both brand images and to gain competitive advantage* (Ahn et al. 2010, Geylani et al. 2008; Prince and Davies, 2002; Park et al. 1996; Chun and Niehm, 2010). Prior research has shown that the partner within a collaboration has a great influence on the success of this new, unique product. This refers to the degree of 'fit' or matchup between two partners. When fit between partner brands within a co-branding is high, it is evaluated as more favourable or positive than when there is poor fit (Simonin and Ruth, 1998; Park et al. 1996; Bouten et al. 2011; Ahn et al. 2010; Ahn and Sung, 2012). To get a better understanding of outcome effects of co-branding strategies and the importance of fit, this literature review starts with an overview of why companies work together, in terms of benefits, but also describes the containing risks. With use of literature about fit from a 'brand extension context' which is more explored, and

5 Aaker's model 'dimensions of fit' (Aaker and Keller, 1990) acting as a basis, the importance of fit is conducted into a theoretical framework. This framework is used to define hypotheses about fit and the importance of (initial) brand images on the overall attitude towards a fashion collaboration.

Benefits and Risks

When two brands work together they make use of each other's brand strengths to gain mutual advantages. In general, strategic expansion, sharing managerial, financial and technical risks and knowledge are the most important reasons for companies to work together according to Whipple and Gentry (2000). However, fashion companies have special needs and look more for 'back-of-house' competences, like fashion product design, product development, responsive manufacturing and 'market facing competences', such as brand creation and management, marketing communications and PR and retail and sales channel presentation (Wigley and Provelengiou, 2010). Especially these market facing competences helped luxury fashion brands to expand on the Dutch market, to which fashion collaborations have delivered an important contribution (Fashionunited, 2012). However, Chun and Niehm (2010) state that this is not the main focus for fashion companies when they look for an appropriate co-branding partner. They argue that product, design and promotion advantages and cost reduction - rather than an increase of sales channels - is what fashion companies are after. Co-branding leverage not only advantages, but also risks which have to be considered. Examples of failure within a fashion collaboration are Madonna (although not a fashion brand) for H&M and Julie Verhoeven for Louis Vuitton (Chun and Niehm, 2010). Herewith, the individual companies risk degraded brand associations, as both brands did not add enough value (Prince and Davies, 2002). This can be attributed to an ambiguous concept and inconsistency between existing brand images, which creates confusion for consumers (Chun and Niehm, 2010). This risk is increased, as both brands put their 'identity' or control over product and brand characteristics in the other's hands. In this way, also negative brand meaning can be transferred, especially when one of the brands' image is affected by negative

press for instance (Leuthesser et al. 2003; James, 2005). Therefore a strong, positive, relationship among two parties is essential; or fit between two parties should be logical.

Aaker and Keller's (1990) 'three dimensions of fit'

The idea of the importance of fit between two products is in literature mostly explored in relation to brand extensions and refers to the idea of similarity, congruity or matchup between two brands or companies (Milberg et al. 2010, Zimmer and Bhat, 2004; Grime et al. 2002, Park et al. 1991, Aaker and Keller, 1990). Aaker and Keller's (1990) 'three dimensions of fit' is set up to measure fit between two brands. This model is defined within a brand extension context and has functioned in literature as a strong base. The three components of the model that measure fit, are;

1. **Complementary**; refers to the extent to which consumers view two product classes as complements. Products seem complementary if they satisfy some particular needs together, such as the use of different makeup products (mascara, product category 'makeup') and beauty products (anti aging cream, product category 'beauty products') to look better. *Both* products are *necessary* to look groomed.
2. **Substitutability**; means that two product classes are substitute of each other and could satisfy the same consumer need. Think of a consumer who wants to make a 'fashion statement'. He could choose for trendy shoes (product category 'shoes') or for a pair of fluorescent jeans for instance (product category 'apparel' or 'trousers') to emphasize his personal statement. Both product classes fulfil the same need or purpose (in this case; to make a statement).
3. **Transferability**; is the perception of consumers to the ability of a manufacturer to operate in a new area or product class. Think of a manufacturer in leather shoes (product category 'leather shoes') who also starts to manufacture bags (product category 'leather bags'). It would be less believable if those bags were made of plastic, as this is not the expertise of the company.

By measuring the above described three components, results show that a more favourable attitude is achieved when consumers perceive a fit among two products (Aaker and Keller, 1990). When fit is high, positive associations of the core brand will be transferred more easily (Aaker and Keller, 1990; Park et al. 1991; Grime et al. 2002). Fit plays not only a role in the context of brand extensions (when one company introduces a product in a 'new product category'), but is also an important determinant for co-branded products as 'fit' also influence consumer evaluations when *two* different companies introduce a new product *together* (James, 2006). So, fit *between* those companies or brands is important. Therefore, James (2006) argues that Aaker and Keller's (1990) model provides an important framework for identifying factors that influence the success of a brand extension as well as co-branding. However, it seems that for this study not every element of Aaker and Keller's (1990) 'three dimensions of fit' is as suitable while it is developed from the context of matching two products from different product categories (product-fit), instead of measuring fit among products from the same product category. As in the current study focus is on fit (brand-fit) within a co-branding from two fashion companies from the same product category (instead of different product categories), it is important to split the degree of fit in two levels; product-fit and brand-fit (Bouten et al. 2011). However Aaker & Keller's (1990) model measures product-fit of the 'three dimensions of fit', it could be amended for the context of 'branding' (brand-fit) as follows:

- *Complementary* (do brands fit together, and fulfill particular needs?)
- *Substitutability* (do two brands satisfy the same consumer needs?)
- *Transferability* (is the brand 'believable' when operating in this market segment?)

The idea of co-branding is that the combinations of two or more brands do matter to and are understandable for consumers, based on product-fit and brand-fit (Park et al. 1996). Within this study product-fit, which refers to 'the extent to which consumers perceive two product categories as compatible' (Helmig et al. 2007, p. 288) is not relevant, as the main focus is on fashion companies within the same industry, who set up a contemporary fashion collection. However, brand-fit which 'refers to the fit of brand perceptions,

images and associations, are perceived to be suited for a new product branded by two brands simultaneously' (Helmig et al. 2007, p. 288) is what needs more explanation within a fashion context.

Most common fashion collaborations are between luxury fashion brands and casual wear such as H&M who set up a temporary collection with Versace (Chun and Niehm, 2010). So aside from the fact that both companies offer the same products 'clothing', brand-fit is the factor that links them within a co-branding or fashion collaboration. Brand images of luxury fashion brands and high-street retailers are on different levels and seem based on more functional (high-street retailer) or high affective / symbolic (luxury brand) image. As consumers are able to form one evaluation of the fashion collaboration collection, brand images of both participants are evaluated. Therefore, it seems that both parties fulfill a different role within a fashion collaboration. According to Prince and Davies (2002) this role-fulfillment should be based on an equal basis, with brands on a same level. The benefit for both parties is that they are able to make better agreements and are capable to organise the whole collaboration in a better manner.

However, it is not necessary that partners contribute equally within a co-branding (Ruth and Simonin, 1998). In fact, other studies show that consumers behold cobranded products as more positive when there is an asymmetrical relationship between two parties (Bouten et al. 2011; Geylani et al. 2008; Besharat, 2010). This asymmetrical relationship should be seen from a brand equity or brand image perspective. It is important to add that Martinez and Pina (2003) argue that the higher the brand image is before an extension, the higher the latter will be. This is also found within co-branding; prior attitudes towards the partner brand have an effect on the overall attitude towards the co-branded product (Ruth and Simonin, 1998). So even within an asymmetrical relationship strong brand images help to set up a stronger co-branded product. In general, brand-fit plays an important role to ensure brand associations transfer more easily, as discussed earlier (Simonin and Ruth, 1998; Bouten et al. 2011; Bluemelhuber et al. 2007; Ahn and Sung, 2012). Especially within an asymmetrical co-branding relationship it seems that fit is important, to avoid disorder between brand image, so to not confuse consumers (Geylani et al. 2008). Thus the following hypotheses have been constructed and are illustrated in Fig 1 below:

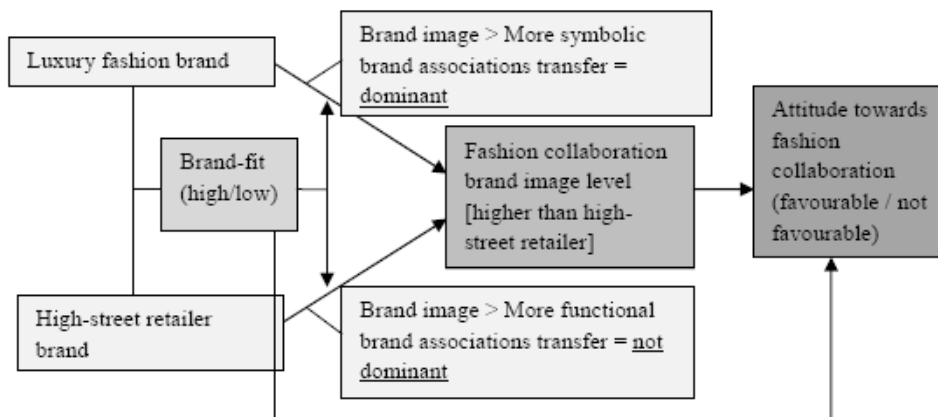


Fig. 1 Hypothesised structural model of the importance of brand-fit and (initial) brand images on the overall attitude towards the fashion collaboration collection

H1: High brand-fit has a positive impact on the overall attitude towards the fashion collaboration collection between a luxury fashion brand and high-street retailer

H2: The perceived brand image of the fashion collaboration collection, distilled from the initial brand images of a luxury fashion brand and high-street retailer, has a positive impact on the overall attitude towards the co-branded collection

H3: Luxury fashion brands are seen as more symbolic brands vs. high-street retailers, which are evaluated as more functional brands

H4a: The brand image level of the fashion collaboration is higher than the initial brand image level of the high-street retailer

H4b: The brand image associations of luxury fashion brands are more dominant than the brand image associations of high-street retailers

H4c: The symbolic brand meaning of the luxury fashion brand vs. high-street retailer is more dominant in the overall evaluation of the brand image of the fashion collaboration collection

H5: The effect of H4(a,b,c) is moderated by the degree of fit (high), as (symbolic) brand associations can be transferred more easily

Methodology

This paper's philosophical starting point comes from a phenomenological approach due to the belief that consumers show under certain circumstances, the same behaviour or thoughts. 'Proof' that this approach is valuable and realistic, is seen in this literature review due to the fact that the importance of fit and its effect on attitude is conducted and replicated in at least 10 studies (Milberg et al. 2010; Zimmer and Bhat, 2004; Grime et al. 2002; Park et al. 1991; Aaker and Keller, 1990; Bouten et al. 2011; Helmig et al. 2007; Simonin and Ruth 1998; Ahn and Sung, 2012; Ahn et al. 2010). A quantitative or deductive approach fits the current study best as it fulfills the research question and aims to provide conclusions and causal claims, based on comparing different groups (high fit vs. low fit and brand image levels of high-street retailers, luxury fashion brands and the fashion collaboration). A qualitative approach makes this almost impossible as it focuses on actors instead of testing relationships on such scale that robust results are obtained (Dooley, 2001). Therefore, a qualitative method is rejected.

The chosen statistical technique is a quantitative experiment as it provides justifiable rationale of the defined hypotheses and strongly answers a '*what*' question, that is the basis of the research question (Yin, 2003). The advantage of an experiment is that it helps provide propositions for further inquiry. Thereby, results between two groups can be compared and are therefore very suitable for providing guidelines for fashion brands/retailers who search for an appropriate business partner when setting up a fashion collaboration, i.e. the overall aim of this study (Yin, 2003). However, limitations of this approach, which in general count for all quantitative research, are that it only tests the defined hypotheses, but does not give an explanation as to *why* a theory is approved or rejected. To solve this, secondary data in terms of literature helps provide some of these answers. To collect data, an in-between subject design is set up. This means that respondents had to answer several questions about a new temporary fashion collaboration collection with use of questionnaires. In the form of news articles, two different fictitious alliance scenarios were presented (one case per news article). Respondents had to fill in a survey about *one* of these presented fictitious alliance scenarios;

(i) one high-street retailer with a luxury fashion brand, with *high fit*. This case was conducted between Vero Moda and DKNY

(ii) same high-street retailer with *another* luxury brand, with *poor fit*. This case was conducted between Vero Moda and Louis Vuitton

Ahn et al. (2010) have also successfully used the method of presenting different fictive fashion collaboration cases in news articles. By doing so they have tested different factors that influence fit within a fashion collaboration. Advantage of using fictive cases is that when respondents form their opinion, attitudes from the past are not taken into account. Thereby, when asking respondents about real examples, they often think of successful cases and so limitations in amount of variations would occur (Bouten et al. 2011).

Real brand names are used to measure brand image levels and transfer and to make the news articles more believable (Simonin and Ruth, 1998; Ahn et al. 2010). Feedback from the conducted pretest stated

that respondents had difficulties to form an immediate brand image. Therefore, recent advertisements of both brands were added to these articles. Thus, visual cues help to compare brands and to form a stronger brand image perception, as it activates a more concrete mindset (Meyvis et al. 2012). 118 young Dutch women, age 18-30 have participated in this experiment, as these type of consumers are more involved with fashion and seem more open for fashion innovations, as so for fashion collaborations (Vieira, 2009; Beaudoin et al. 2003). Respondents were gathered in a canteen of a Dutch University, as willingness in this setting to participate was relatively high.

A pretest was set up to develop stimulus material for the final experiment. Results provided one high-street retailer and two luxury fashion brands with respectively a high fit and poor fit. Therefore, those three brands -Vero Moda, LouisVuitton and DKNY - are used as stimulus material in the 'news articles' within the final experiment

The essence of this experiment is to uncover causal paths (arrows between subjects in Figure 1) between and therefore the questions for the questionnaire seeked to investigate:

1) Independent variables;

- luxury fashion brands; a) image level and b) symbolic / functional brand beliefs;
- high-street retailer; a) image level and b) symbolic / functional brand beliefs; c) degree of fit, high/low, and

2) Dependant variables;

- a) brand image level of the fashion collaboration and b) symbolic / functional brand beliefs of the fashion collaboration;
- d) attitude towards the fashion collaboration

So four different constructs (a, b, c, d) are set up in the questionnaire. The item a) brand image level, is measured on a 7-point scale (agree / disagree; "attractiveness", "fame", "stylishness" and "practicality") which is also used by Ahn et al. (2010) to measure brand image levels within a fashion collaboration

The idea of this construct is to measure the positive associations that consumers perceive from a brand as an attribute that differentiates it from others (Ahn et al. 2010). To measure in what extent Vero Moda, Louis Vuitton, DKNY and the fashion collaboration are perceived as more functional or symbolic brands (b), Bhat and Reddy (1998) measurement scale for brand symbolism is used as a basis. Functional brands have low scores on this scale, while symbolic brands have high scores. Originally, this measurement scale contains 17 questions / statements. As this is too long for this survey, only the six questions with highest Cronbach's alpha are used. As Bhat and Reddy (1998, p.36) argue that 'the symbolic construct may be twodimensional, one focusing on the prestige of the brand and the other on the use of the brand for expressing the user's personality', three questions measured the item 'Prestige' on a 7-point scale ("stylish vs. plain", "expressive vs. subdued", "glamorous vs. sedate"). The other three questions measured the item 'Users personality' by using three statements, based on Bhat and Reddy (1998, p.35), rated on a 7-point scale (agree/disagree, "people use ... (brand) as a way of expressing their personality", "a consumer wearing ... (brand) stands out in a crowd" and "wearing clothes from ... (brand) says something about the kind of person you are"). Brand-fit (c) is measured on a 7-point scale and is adapted from Bouten et al. (2011, p.468) and is based on Aaker and Keller (1990) (agree/disagree, "I think these brands are consistent", "I think these brands are complementary" and "I think the brands fit each other"). The advantage of this measurement scale is that it concentrates on brand-fit instead of product-fit. In the analysis, the effects of brand-fit are measured directly (effects towards attitude of the fashion collaboration) and indirectly (effects on the brand image transfer of both brands). Finally, to measure the attitude towards the fashion collaboration (d), previously used 7-point scales ("likeness vs. unlike" and "favourableness vs. unfavourable") by Ahn et al. (2010) and Ahn and Sung (2012) are used.

Results

All results are presented by hypothesis in this section.

H1: High brand-fit has a positive impact on the overall attitude towards the fashion

collaboration collection between a luxury fashion brand and high-street retailer

All statements within the questionnaire, measured correctly the construct 'fit' ($\alpha=0,91$) and 'attitude' ($\alpha=0,92$). To determine poor (low) versus high fit as formulated in the hypothesis, a median split is carried out at 4,33 (=Median). A Single Linear Regression analysis is used to measure the degree of variance or dispersion, of - in this case - the independent variable (fit, high/low) as a predictor for the dependent variable (attitude towards the fashion collaboration).

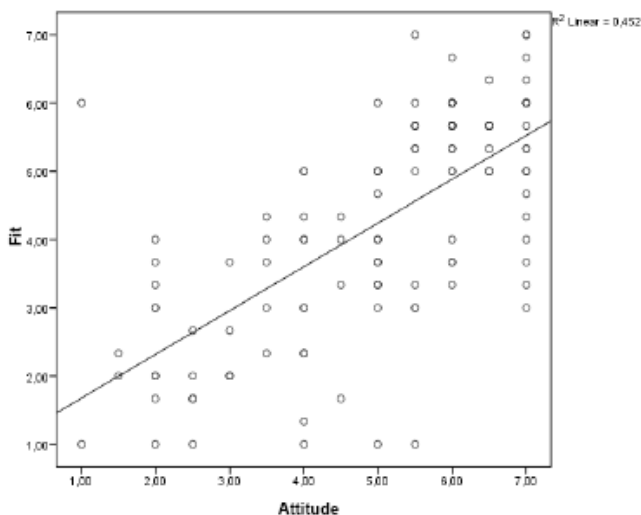


Fig. 2 Single Linear Regression for fit and overall attitude towards the fashion collaboration. An upward trend is visible for fit as predictor for attitude towards the fashion collaboration

The unstandardised Beta coefficient (0,7) indicates significant ($P<0,001$) that if fit increases with '1', attitude increases positively with '0,7' on a 7-point scale. This effect is illustrated in Figure 2. To underline this effect, as a single measurement technique is used, it is important to check if there is cohesion between fit and attitude towards the fashion collaboration, with help of Pearson's Correlation coefficient.

There is a very strong link between those two variables (Correlation coefficient, 0,67, $p<0,001$). According to guidelines of Cohen and Cohen (1983) this cohesion is great. Thus, fit between two brands has a significant ($p<0,001$, $F[117], 95,60$), direct (positive) impact on the attitude towards the fashion collaboration, so the hypothesis is accepted.

H2: The perceived brand image of the fashion collaboration collection, distilled from the initial brand images of a luxury fashion brand and high-street retailer, has a positive impact on the overall attitude towards the co-branded collection

Again, a Single Linear Regression analysis is conducted to investigate the degree of variance and direct effect of the brand image level of the fashion collaboration ($\alpha=0,77$) as a predictor for the overall attitude towards this collection ($\alpha=0,92$). The construct brand image (level) is originally measured with four items ('attractiveness', 'fame', 'stylishness' and 'practicality'). Cronbach's alpha was too low for these four items that have measured the brand image level of luxury brands. To obtain a higher Cronbach's alpha, the item 'practicability' is deleted within the analysis. So, finally brand image is measured with three items or questions from the questionnaire, instead of the initial four items. The Regression analysis shows there is a significant effect between the two variables ($p<0,001$, $F[117], 43,05$), as illustrated in Figure 3.

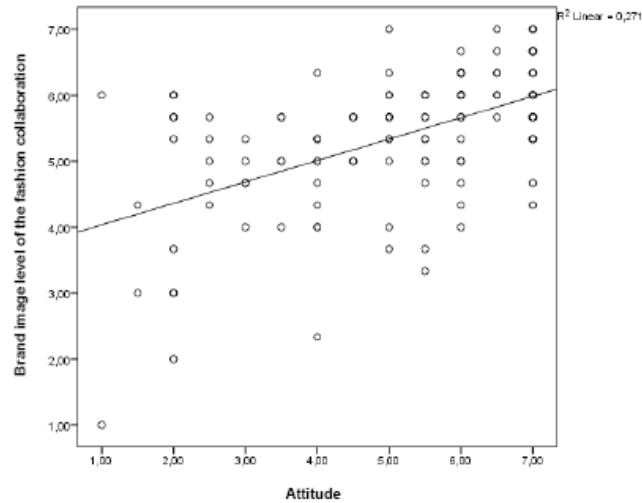


Fig. 3 Single Linear Regression analysis for brand image level of the fashion collaboration and overall attitude towards the fashion collaboration. An upward trend is visible for brand image level as predictor for attitude towards the fashion collaboration

There is a very strong effect of the brand image of the fashion collaboration on the overall attitude towards the fashion collaboration. If the brand image level increases with '1', attitude increases with '0,83' on a 7-point scale. Also correlation between the two variables is large, which underlines this effect (Pearson's Correlation coefficient is ($p < 0,001$) 0,52)). Herewith, hypothesis 2 is approved.

H3: Luxury fashion brands are seen as more symbolic brands vs. high-street retailers, which are evaluated as more functional brands

The statistical analysis used to measure this hypothesis is a paired t-test as it compares the means of two groups which are related to each other (Huizingh, 2003). There is a significantly large difference between both groups ($p < 0,001$, $t[117] = -17,93$); High street retailers (measured with Vero Moda ($\bar{D} = 0,79$)) score average 3,63 on the 'symbolic brand scale' and so could be considered as functional brands in contrast to luxury fashion brands (measured with Louis Vuitton and DKNY ($\bar{D} = 0,77$)), who have an average score of 5,5. Therefore, luxury fashion brands can be considered as symbolic brands and high street retailers as functional brands, which approve the hypothesis.

H4a: The brand image level of the fashion collaboration is higher than the initial brand image level of the high-street retailer

Again, a paired t-test is used to test this hypothesis to compare means and investigate differences per respondent between the brand image level of the high-street retailer ($\bar{D} = 0,74$) and the fashion collaboration ($\bar{D} = 0,77$). Herewith it answers the question whether respondents estimate the brand image level of the fashion collaboration higher than the initial parent brand (high-street retailer). There is a difference in judgment of the brand image levels as suggested by the hypothesis, though this relationship is not significant ($p > 0,05$, $t[117] = 1,66$). Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

H4b: The brand image associations of luxury fashion brands are more dominant than the brand image associations of high-street retailers

A Multiple Linear Regression analysis is used as it measures the impact (effect) of more than two variables; brand image level / associations of the high-street retailer ($\bar{D} = 0,74$) as well as luxury fashion brands ($\bar{D} = 0,6$) in the evaluation of the brand image level / associations of the fashion collaboration ($\bar{D} = 0,77$). Cronbachs alpha of the luxury fashion brand image level is not favourable, though reasonable to use. The analysis shows that the brand image level of luxury fashion brands (DKNY / Louis Vuitton) have a significantly greater impact on the brand image level of the fashion collaboration than the high-street retailer (Vero Moda) ($p > 0,05$, $F[117] = 14,72$). This difference is clearly visible in Figures 4a and 4b

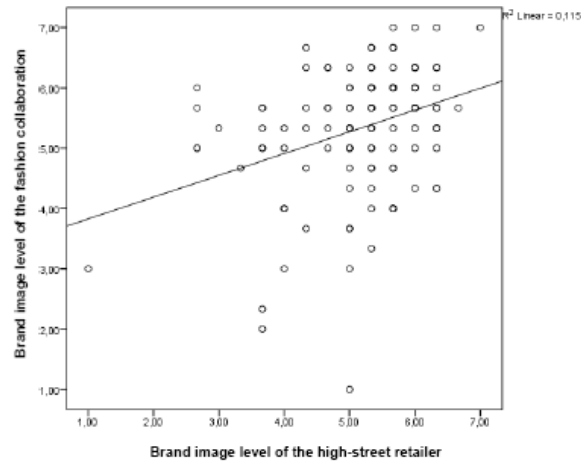


Fig. 4a Multiple Linear Regression for the brand image levels of the high-street retailer towards the brand image level of the fashion collaboration. The different degree of impact (high street retailer vs. luxury fashion brand) of the brand image level as a predictor is clearly visible between Figures 4a and 4b

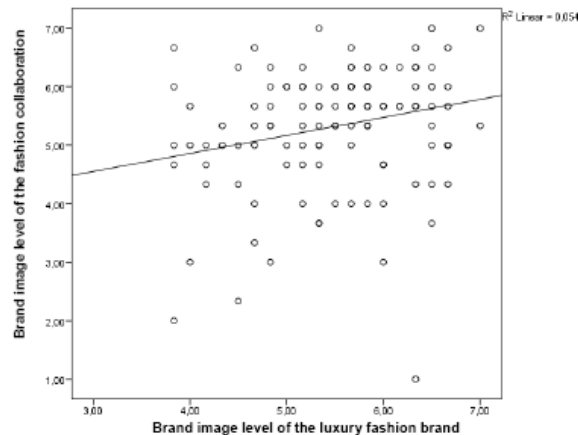


Fig. 4b Multiple Linear Regression for the brand image levels of the luxury fashion brands towards the brand image level of the fashion collaboration. The different degree of impact (high street retailer vs. luxury fashion brand) of the brand image level as a predictor is clearly visible between Figures 4a and 4b

The unstandardised Beta coefficient implies that if the brand image level of the luxury fashion brand increases with '1' on a 7-point scale, the brand image level of the fashion collaboration increases with '0,42' ($p < 0,001$, $F[117]=12,82$). When the brand image level of the high-street retailer increases with '1' on a 7-point scale, the brand image level of the fashion collaboration only increases with '0,28' ($p < 0,01$, $F[117]=9,29$). This different degree of impact is clearly visible in Figures 4a and 4b. So, the impact of the brand image level of the luxury fashion brands on the brand image level of the fashion collaboration is significantly higher, which approves the hypothesis.

H4c: The symbolic brand meaning of the luxury fashion brand vs. high-street retailer is more dominant in the overall evaluation of the brand image of the fashion collaboration collection

Again, a Multiple Linear Regression analysis is used to test this hypothesis, as it measures the impact (effect) of more than two variables; symbolic brand meaning of the high-street retailer and luxury fashion brands on the brand image (level) of the fashion collaboration. Results show that symbolic brand meaning (measured with the 'symbolic brand level scale') of the luxury fashion brands ($\beta=0,83$) are significantly more dominant than the functional brand associations of the high-street retailer ($\beta=0,77$) in the overall judgment of the (symbolic) brand image (level) of the fashion collaboration collection ($\beta=0,87$). The

unstandardised Beta coefficient shows that if the high-street retailer is perceived as less functional, and so increases with '1' on a 7-point scale, overall judgment of the brand image (level) of the fashion collaboration increases significantly with '0,43' ($p < 0,001$, $F[117]=36,17$). If a luxury brand - which is perceived as a high symbolic brand - increases with '1' on a 7-point scale, judgments of the (symbolic) brand image level of the fashion collaboration increases significantly with '0,53' ($p < 0,001$, $F[117]=40,09$). This different degree of impact is clearly visible in Figures 5a and 5b

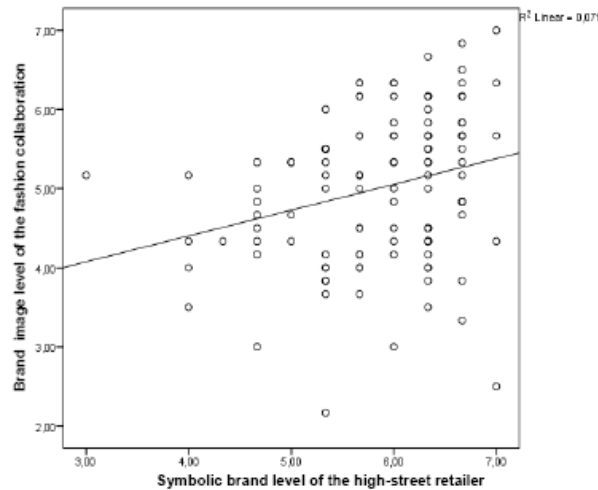


Fig. 5a Multiple Linear Regression for symbolic brand level / associations of the high-street retailer towards the symbolic brand level of the fashion collaboration. The different degree of impact (high-street retailer vs. luxury fashion brand) of the symbolic brand level as a predictor is clearly visible between Figures 5a and 5b

So, symbolic meaning of the luxury fashion brand (vs. high-street retailer) has a stronger impact on the perceived brand image (level) of the fashion collaboration, what approves the hypothesis.

H5: The effect of H4(a,b,c) is moderated by the degree of fit (high), as (symbolic) brand associations can be transferred more easily

For hypotheses H4a, H4b and H4c, a moderation effect is expected by the degree of fit ($D=0,92$). This moderation effect is measured within the earlier used Regression analyses by adding the product term of the predictable variables (brand image levels and symbolic brand levels of the luxury fashion brands and high-street retailer) with fit; so, brand image levels*fit and symbolic brand levels*fit on the judgment of the brand image level of the fashion collaboration collection. For neither of the hypotheses, there is a significant effect ($p > 0,05$). So, fit has no moderation effect and therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

Conclusion

First, this study provides answers about the importance of fit within a fashion collaboration. Results of this study demonstrate that brand-fit, that is fit between two brands from the fashion industry, is deeply rooted in the perception of consumers. Thus, consumers 'use fit' as a direct cue to evaluate the fashion collaboration by forming an attitude towards this new collection. When there is high brand-fit consumers perceive the fashion collaboration as more

favourable. The degree of fit is therefore an important predictor of the success of a fashion collaboration and a factor that should be considered when two fashion companies want to form a partnership. Consumers evaluate each brand (image) within a fashion collaboration separately, as fit has no moderation effect or influence in the way the brand image level of the fashion collaboration is perceived. The idea behind this statement was that fit helps consumers to 'melt' and evaluate two brands within a fashion

collaboration more easily. So, fit does not create fluency to process information. Indeed, consumers do not need extra fluency as limited information (about sales channel, price level, brand names and number of items) is enough to form a strong opinion about the fashion collaboration collection.

Secondly, this study uncovered what role the different brand images of a luxury fashion brand and high-street retailer play regarding the overall attitude towards the fashion collaboration. To start with, it is important to recognise that the brand image of the fashion collaboration has a direct impact on the attitude of consumers towards the fashion collaboration. Findings of the current study illustrate that luxury fashion brands have greater impact on the perceived brand image of the fashion collaboration as its initial brand image level with symbolic brand associations is higher in comparison to a high-street retailer. However, within the evaluation of the brand image level of the fashion collaboration, symbolic associations are more present. In other words, the luxury fashion brand is more used by consumers to determine the brand image level of the fashion collaboration. Therefore, a fashion collaboration between a luxury fashion brand and high-street retailer based on brand image is asymmetrical or unequal at the starting point. Herewith, it partly answers the third objective of the current study; to investigate the difference in brand image levels of the fashion collaboration in comparison to the initial parent brand (high-street retailer). Even though luxury fashion brands are more dominant in the evaluation of the brand image level of the fashion collaboration – and have an initial higher brand image level than the high-street retailer – results show that the brand image level of the fashion collaboration is not significantly higher than the initial brand image level of the high-street retailer. So, luxury fashion brands and high-street retailers both seem to fulfil their own role within a fashion collaboration.

Every study has its own limitations, as does the current study. Within this study, results have been obtained by the use of limited (two) fictive cases of fashion collaborations. As all brands have their own specific brand image, they differ a lot so it is hard to generalise results. Thereby, the study is conducted within the Netherlands so results cannot be generalised on a worldwide level as culture could play a role in the way Dutch evaluate specific brands.

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Fashion PR agencies in a network of mediation

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Abstract

Fashion magazines are filled with images of flawless men and women in beautiful garments, newspapers review the latest collections of fashion designers and fashion bloggers tell you what's hot and what's not. However, before these messages reach potential customers, several professionals in the fashion field have judged the clothing items. They have an influence in how, when and what clothing is presented as 'fashion'. PR agencies play a big role in this process of judgement, valuation and meaning making of dress.

In short, PR agencies aim at gaining media attention for the fashion brands they represent with the use of marketing and promotional techniques. Nowadays PR is seen as more than just writing press releases; it is about event management, strategy building and branding as well. Over the past two decades PR has become increasingly more important in the fashion industry. For example, young designers are being advised to 'professionalize' by employing PR professionals instead of doing their own PR. This has caused for a new demand and growth of PR agencies that specialize in fashion and lifestyle (Molloy and Lerner 2012).

This article zooms in on the PR profession in order to gain a better understanding of what the profession contains and its role within the fashion industry. The article is based on preliminary research for a dissertation on fashion PR agencies in the Netherlands, literature research and interviews with PR professionals of five Dutch fashion PR agencies.

First, the article will focus on how the fashion world is part of the aesthetic economy and how this affects the role of PR within the fashion field. Then it will discuss fashion PR agencies as 'cultural intermediation', which is a term by Pierre Bourdieu. Third, the article will focus on how and why PR work is seen as aesthetic labour. And finally, the importance of networks and taste for the PR profession will be discussed with the use of Bourdieu's notion of symbolic, social, economic and cultural capital.

Selling dreams

In the ever-changing fashion industry wants are equally important as needs. The industry is not only responsible for creating garments, but also for attaching stories, images, emotions and dreams to clothing, since for fashion meaning is more important than functionality (Godart and Mears 2008). Therefore, clothing is subjected to the signs attached to it, and fashion can be seen as the cultural production and the consumption of signs and symbols.

Media play an important role in provoking the desires and feelings attached to dress, by communicating images, signs and symbols that represent designers and brands. Positive media coverage can shape public opinion, which is crucial for a fashion company's success, since in today's media dominated world a fashion brand cannot ignore the public opinion of its potential consumers. If fashion brands do not create an image for themselves, there is a chance the consumer will do it for them. Moreover, if a brand does not get media attention at all, there is a possibility that the consumer will never know of its existence (Sherman and Perlman 2010).

PR can be a powerful tool to proactively shape the public's opinion about a fashion brand (Sherman and Perlman 2010). The 'fashion success' of a look or an outfit is largely determined by the consumer's opinion, so the challenge of PR is to shape the consumer's ideas about the fashion brand and its clothing. The main strategy of PR is approaching media, such as magazines, radio, television and blogs that can give attention to the fashion brands they represent. By being presented in a specific magazine, TV show or fashion blog, brands make use of the aspiration level of media to approach potential consumers. For example, an article



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Keywords: Fashion PR Agencies, PR, Pierre Bourdieu, Cultural Intermediaries, Capital, Aesthetic Labour, Taste

in 'Vogue' magazine can help brands become even more desirable and by putting a blogger front row at a fashion show a brand can become famous overnight amongst a large young audience.

Today PR has grown out to be an indispensable part of the fashion industry. However, the growth of the role of fashion PR did not happen overnight, nor in a vacuum, but is the result of a growing aesthetic economy and a decline in traditional social structures such as the church and family (Ewenstein and Whyte 2007). Postmodern ideas of reflexivity and self-construction of one's identity have taken their place. For today's eclectic and fluid individual, fashion and lifestyle play a great role in shaping a preferred identity and position within social groups.

The fashion industry is part of the aesthetic economy, which is the result of the increasing desire and need to create and shape identities with goods and products. We have therefore entered a new phase of capitalism "brought about by the transition from an economy of needs, savings and scarcity to an economy based on desires" (Roberts 2003: 6).

The following section will further discuss the position of fashion PR agencies in the production of these signs, symbols and stories as being 'cultural intermediaries'.

PR Agencies and Cultural Intermediation

Over the last two decades more and more PR agencies have been set up to take charge of PR for a variety of fashion companies, from high-end labels to young designers and mass-market fashion brands. These PR agencies intermediate between the production and consumption of fashion. The idea of intermediation comes from the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. In his revolutionary work *Distinction* (1984) he introduced the term 'cultural intermediaries' when he referred to the growing amount of journalists, radio and television-makers, which he called the 'new petit bourgeoisie'. Later the term was expanded to talk about "those workers engaged in occupations involving presentation and representation ... providing symbolic goods and services" (Negus 2002: 502). These are for instance occupations concerning media, arts, entertainment industries, advertising and marketing and are involved in "taste-making or defining, shaping the ways in which we encounter and make sense of cultural artefacts in their work of mediation" (Wissinger 2009: 7). In other words, these workers shape commodity goods and with that are "responsible for framing or promoting culture within the capitalist marketplace" (Wissinger 2009: 7).

Alongside architecture, gaming, advertising and design, the fashion industry is part of the 'creative industry'. These creative industries work with 'initial creation'; the creation of form, meanings and symbolic value (topsectoren.nl). Several authors have argued that, because research has moved on to focus on the creative industries, 'cultural intermediation' can no longer be thought of in terms of particular occupations, spaces or events (Molloy and Larner 2010; Powers 2012): "Instead, cultural mediation is more productively understood as a function of the multiplicity of activities and relationships organised around the new economic spaces of the fashion industry, all of which are subject to the exigencies of capital accumulation" (Molloy and Larner 2010: 362).

This means PR agencies in the fashion industry are part of a 'chain of mediation'. PR workers do not simply mediate between production and consumption, but rather they negotiate between multiple 'regimes of mediation' (Cronin 2004). Their work of connecting fashion brands to media consists of negotiating with journalists, stylists, and magazines editors, marketing managers and designers. With each contact they have a different commercial relationship that is "constantly redefined and brought into being" (Cronin 2004: 366). PR agencies play a crucial part in qualifying products since they not just organize types of products or enhance their value, but they "organize the commodity candidacy of things which relies on criteria (symbolic, classificatory and moral) that define the exchangeability of goods within a social and historical context" (Appadurai 1986: 14). In other words, they structure classes of products, the relationships amongst those products and towards forms of exchange (Cronin 2004). Therefore, PR agencies "shape use values and exchange values that are crucial for contemporary commodification" (Negus 2002: 504).

Moreover, within the fashion business cultural intermediaries like PR agencies not only work with 'symbolic production', but with *objects*: PR professionals continuously place garments in different contexts, depending on who they are working for, or with. With that they change the meaning and value of garments. For example, PR agencies work with stylists, but also with finance managers of brands; the former wants to create a beautiful image and the latter approaches fashion items as profitable products. A successful PR agent knows how to 'sell' clothing to a variety of clients by acting accordingly depending on who she is dealing with. Therefore, PR work can be seen as a form of 'aesthetic labour' which will be further discussed below.

PR as Aesthetic Labour

The fashion industry in general is seen as 'feminized': "Fashion is of course an almost wholly feminized industry. Apart from a few men at the top, including manufacturers and retailers, celebrity designers and magazine publishers, it is and has been a female sphere of production and consumption" (McRobbie 1998: 13). Moreover, the fashion field relies on skills and interests that are seen as typically 'feminine'. Frequently, an interest in fashion is seen as feminine, but also the interest in communications and aesthetics (Molloy and Larner 2010). Furthermore, public relations is seen as a feminine occupation (Pompper 2012) and has been defined as 'woman's work' by many authors (Tsetsura 2010). Research has also shown that PR work is confronted with many stereotypes because of this. It is for instance seen as an 'easy job' with a focus on 'selling hot air' (Tsetsura 2010).

Especially PR women in fashion and lifestyle are confronted with these stereotypes. Even female PR workers themselves have claimed that there are more so called 'PR bunnies' in the fashion industry than in for instance the technology field. This shows that the fashion PR profession struggles with negative stereotypes and is often reduced to a job that is only about hanging around at social events and is occasionally frowned upon for its lack of professionalism because appearance plays such an important role (Fröhlich and Peters 2007).

The importance of appearance and personality for fashion PR makes the profession a form of 'aesthetic labour'. This is a type of labour that operates 'on and through the body' (Witz et al. 2003). It refers to being, looking, sounding and acting in a certain way that pleases the "customer's senses" (Ewenstein and Whyte 2007: 7), or to professions where a certain attitude is important "that enables employees to 'look good and sound right' for the job" (Warhurst and Nickson 2001: 2). Furthermore, aesthetic labour refers to a feeling for "style, appearance and customer experience" (Ewenstein and Whyte 2007: 7).

For fashion PR this feeling is crucial when interacting with commercial relationships, such as stylists, magazine editors and fashion designers. First of all, PR agents have to 'sell' their promotional and commercial skills to brands and secondly, have to 'sell' stories and images of the brands they represent to media. In order to do this successfully, they have to be presentable, but also have a certain personality (Entwistle and Wissinger 2006). This means being a good networker and excellent communicator: a PR agent needs to be outgoing, friendly and sociable. PR workers are therefore engaged in 'strategic friendliness' (Pierce 1995) towards media workers, designers and marketing managers of brands. This type of friendliness is a form of "emotional manipulation of another person, using friendliness, politeness, and tact, to achieve a desired outcome" (Mears and Finlay 2005: 20). A clear example of this is the seating at fashion shows. PR agents attach great importance to who sits front row at a fashion show given by their designer clients. The editors-in-chief of important fashion magazines for example have to sit front row, as well as celebrities that endorse the brand by attending the show. Having a good relationship with media and celebrities is essential for PR success, because PR relies on them to gain publicity for the brands in their portfolio. Not having a front row spot for 'important people in the business' can be disastrous for the PR agency as well as for its client; the fashion brand.

Moreover, PR agents promote their agency with their bodies that "are harnessed to sell the organization's image, literally by embodying it" (Entwistle and Wissinger 2006: 2). For example, a PR agent of a sustainable brand has to have a suitable 'green' look, which is different from a PR agent who represents a high-end

label. The former cannot show up at a meeting with a media professional in an environmentally unfriendly car, because that does not suit the brand she represents and can damage her image as well as that of the brand. The latter on the other hand, will be more reliable when she wears a stylish expensive high-end label when meeting a fashion journalist or magazine editor.

Furthermore, PR agents have to know the 'right people in the business'. Therefore, a PR agents' work includes attending shop openings, parties and other fashion events. This networking at social events plays an important role for many professions in the fashion industry, since these events are used to meet other members in the business and generate new business (Wissinger 2009). Another reason for having a large network of 'the right people' is the symbolic and social capital this creates for PR agents within the fashion field. These forms of capital, coined by Pierre Bourdieu will be explained and applied to fashion PR agencies in the following section.

Networks and Taste in the Fashion Field

PR agents have to believe in the 'rules of the game' in order to work within the fashion field: "To work as fashion producers, they must believe in the autonomy of what they are doing, even as social conditions influence their actions and choices in profound ways" (Godart and Mears 2008: 10). In other words, PR work is socially constructed.

According to Pierre Bourdieu, the social world in general is constructed, and can be seen as made up of several fields. These fields are all more or less autonomous, but between, and within fields, power plays a significant role (Ihlen 2007). This power comes in the form of resources, or what Bourdieu called 'capital'. He mentioned four types of capital: "economic capital (money, property), cultural capital (knowledge, skills, educational qualifications), social capital (connections, membership of a group)". In addition, symbolic capital (prestige and honour) is possible by gaining one or more of the former three types of capital (Ihlen 2007: 2).

Social and symbolic capital play an especially significant role in fashion PR. The former can be the social relationship itself wherein PR agencies compete over the amount and quality of potential clients (Pompper 2012). The latter is gained by having young designers and high-end brands in their portfolio, because the agency achieves prestige and honour with those designers and brands. It also shows the agencies' 'good taste'. In other words, it enables PR agencies to "make a name for oneself" (Mears 2010: 25) within the fashion industry.

Economic capital, in other words the earnings of PR agencies, often derives largely from commercial mass-market brands, since the young designers have hardly any money to spend on PR and high-end designers are rare. So with a variety of clients in their portfolio PR agencies try to balance between earnings and prestige, representing economic and symbolic capital respectively, to remain competitive in the industry. The cultural capital of PR agents comes in the form of knowledge about trends, designers, fashion news, connections with important people in the business, and is also called 'fashion capital' (Entwistle and Rocamora 2006).

Having a sense of fashion taste and style is also part of this type of capital. According to Bourdieu, taste is arbitrary, and dependent on one's social position: "the capacity to make aesthetic distinctions, rather than the content of any particular choice, is the most important aspect of aesthetic preferences" (Sherman 2011: 3). For the PR professional, this means that she is successful when she understands different tastes and styles and therefore knows which media to approach for which brand, so that it can eventually reach a certain 'taste-audience' that will find the brand appealing. Thus, PR agents produce taste-based consumption by valuing and selecting clothing items. (Sherman 2011): "Taste would, therefore, seem to be a dynamic force, forged out of ongoing relationships and encounters with product markets" (Entwistle 2006: 11). Sensing and understanding taste can also be described as having 'aesthetic knowledge' which means having an understanding of certain signs and symbols (Ewenstein and Whyte 2007). This knowledge is crucial, not only for the creation of fashion products, but as the above shows, also in PR work when creating a suitable media strategy for a brand.

Conclusion

As discussed in this article, PR agencies are part of a larger chain of mediation within the fashion industry. This chain is responsible for the production of signs, symbols and values that are the driving force behind the creation of fashion products. The valuation of clothing by PR agencies happens in day-to-day encounters with their commercial relationships: stylists and editors of magazines, journalists, bloggers, designers and marketing managers of fashion brands. Each relationship contextualizes clothing and values it in the process of becoming a fashion commodity good.

How clothing is valued not only relies on those interactions, but also on the PR agent who is responsible for 'selling' the clothing to media: how well she networks and whether she knows 'important people in the business'. Another important factor is whether she has aesthetic knowledge and understands fashion style and taste. This is necessary to combine clothing segments to specific media, since not every fashion brand fits seamlessly in a commercial magazine or is a suitable subject for a newsworthy journalistic article.

Aesthetic knowledge and a good network are not only important for PR agents, but crucial for everybody that works in the fashion industry, because these create new tastes and styles for fashion. This creation is not a one-way street though; fashion producers are fashion consumers too, and of course consumers influence the fashion industry in their turn as well.

In the end, the clothing item is subjected to all the above-mentioned factors in its process of becoming a fashion product. These factors influence how, and if, clothing is presented to the consumer as 'fashion'. To better understand these dynamics in the fashion industry and the implications for the clothing itself, further research is needed. For example, 'following' the clothing item in its process of becoming a fashion product can give important insights into the roles of the producers in the fashion field and what kind of influence they have on the commodification of the clothing. This can contribute to a better understanding of the individual occupations, the relationships between the occupations and how they together produce the fairytales, beauty and dreams attached to dress that we call 'fashion'.

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Sudha'68 A New Brand for Artists and Designers

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Abstract

Cont'e Crayons, an international brand famous for its art materials, become a brand icon by itself it's unique product called 'Black Crayons'. Similar to this, a brand called Sudha'68; manufacturers of Art material in India, earned a name which is popularly referred to as Sudha Cont'e among the designers, art students and art professionals. This paper revolves on the research which went into inventing an artist art material and establishing a brand among the buyers across the country through quality products. Sudha'68 is a brand developed by an emeritus Artist in India after 40 years of Indian independence to substitute foreign material (imported) for the need of Artists and designers of India. The paper also explores the various points of business turbulence in establishing the brand and how the brand image is created across the country only through word of mouth. The practical troubles not only in the material research but also in designing the indigenous machines, financial management, workforce (labor), multiple product development (R&D), strategy for product market sustainability (viability as well competition), eco friendly packaging design and production. This paper will be an exemplary work for an entrepreneur who wants to start the business from the scratch. The paper will talk about various facets of trial & turbulence as well the struggle of a business in building brand image with hard & focused work, time management, learning from the mistake, avoiding the mistake in future and, to create flourishing business icon.

1. Introduction

There are a few names which become a brand and there are others in which the product name becomes an icon and a product category by itself. For example Xerox, Sintex and JCB. Xerox is a brand which produces photo copying machines, but among the consumers Xerox is the word used for photo copying irrespective of brand of machine which is used to do that work.

1.1

Many people in Chennai even today don't know that XEROX is a brand. Some times they say Canon Xerox machine instead of Canon Photo copier.

Like this there are few famous brands across the globe in the field of art material manufacturing, namely, Cont'e-Paris, Windsor & Newton-England, Caran d'ache-Swiss, Rembrandt-Holand, Pebeo-france Staedtler-Germany and Faber Castell-Germany. These are the few brands which make exclusive art materials for professional artists. Similarly Sudha'68 is an Indian brand icon popularly known as Sudha Cont'e in the Indian market and among the artists and designers.

2. Rome was not built in a day

Generally one can appreciate, admire and even bewilder seeing certain brand name and its growth. No brand has ever come on its own. Many may not know the real trials and tribulation of a person under gone, the pain he bears, the initial troubles he faced, the losses he accepted and contribution he made to establish the brand. Behind all the successful brands there will be an extraordinary knowledge, years of hard work and sacrifice of an individual person or a group of people. Here this paper reveals the tremendous work and work of a person who was behind the brand and the quality product "Sudha'68"



Sasikumar Kanniyappan

Mr. Sasikumar Kanniyappan has finished his M.F.A in Ceramics, B.F.A in Sculpture Madras University and PGCHE from Nottingham Trent University, UK. Won state level awards for sculpture and National academy recognition. Participated in many solo and group art shows across the country. Participated in national and regional level workshops and camps. Worked as a research scholar in ceramic department, awarded by Lalith Kala Academy, New Delhi. Presented a Paper on innovative product in Textile Institutes centenary conference, Manchester, UK. Undergone training under a senior artist Mrs. Nives for glass training workshop in Pavia, Italy. Commissioned many sculptures and murals, for architects and corporate houses. Hailing from an artisan family mastered the copper sheet metal repose work. Worked in NIFT Chennai, India and currently working in Pearl Academy Chennai, India as Associate professor. Also running a family business, which manufactures art materials, in the brand name of SUDHA'68.

Keywords: Black crayons, Cont'e, Entrepreneur, Research

3. About the inventor

Sudha '68, a brand created for the artist and designers to fulfill the needs of their colorful ideas and imagination. It was established by a reputed sculptor and ceramist Mr. S. Kanniyappan who served as head of the department in Government College of Arts and Crafts, Madras, established by the then British Government in the year 1852. Mr. Kanniyappan's father Mr. Sivanadhachari and grand father Mr. Murugesachari also worked as faculty members in the same college and which was then christened as School of arts, Madras.

Mr. Kanniyappan primarily learned the skill and knowledge from his ancestors and he later joined in fine art college, Madras and acquired his Diploma in metal work and sculpture. After completing the course he joined as faculty member in the sculpture department and later due to his multiple talents, knowledge, efficiency and material understanding, was sent to Calcutta to learn ceramics from a German ceramist Mr. Moush to introduce ceramic department and designed a degree course in the fine arts college.

Mr. Kanniyappan, hailing from an artisan family and being a silver smith, acquired the complete knowledge about the traditional skills as an artist. Being the head of the department he commissioned government projects; as a freelance artist and has erected many monumental, conceptual sculptures and corporate commissions. He was honored as an emeritus sculptor by central Lalith Kala Academy and selected as one of the board of directors in Indian over seas bank by the government of India. He is also a recipient of state; national and international awards and he was recognized by the president of India. Also he was elected as the member for four consecutive terms for about two decades and served as finance committee member in the board of central Lalith Kala Academy, New Delhi.

4. Necessity is the mother of invention

Besides having three decades of experience and knowledge in the field of ceramics, he was one among the eminent artist of Madras, invited for a camp to give a live demonstration of a human portrait. When he started the demonstration he felt very uncomfortable with the waxy art material (crayons) provided by the camp organizers. At the same time he noticed one of his colleague and former principal of Government fine art college, Madras, Mr. S. Dhanapal sketching very fluently. Seeing this he borrowed a crayon from him, this made his work very comfortable and fluent. He then asked the camp organizers to provide him the same one, but he was denied and the answer was that Mr. Dhanapal got it when he traveled to Russia. This answer gave rise to the question within him. Before him none neither thought nor tried to manufacture this kind of crayon in this vast country, even after forty years of independence. This was the spark which made him start the research with the help of his three decades of chemical knowledge in ceramics, and the research went on for more than eight years to develop one single product, and that was named "Sudha Black Crayon".

In these eight years he developed many varieties and samples and the same were given to his contemporaries to test the material and give feed back. Many a times the feed back was polite negative and discouragement from only a few. The detractors said that he can not be succeeded because many industrial giants tried and failed with good R&D departments. Here one can clearly visualize the stubborn, tenacious, and perseverance mind set of Mr. Kanniyappan and he never gave up his research neither for the failures he had faced nor for the criticism and discouragements, until he achieved his vision.

5. The stepping stone

After a great struggle a recipe was developed, which is equal to any other international brand like Cont'e crayon. During this period he hardly got help he needed from his family members and children, and when he got it was once in a blue moon gift. This entire sample was made completely hand grind with pestle and mortar and then shaped on a Plaster of Paris slab and fired in a small tooth powder metal container with a kerosene blow torch. Here I would like to mention about one of his close friend and a soul mate Mr. Sampath lyer who helped him through-out his research every day at least from 8pm to 12pm, for a moral encouragement as well as helping him from grinding the chemicals to holding the blow torch for hours, weighing the chemicals, cleaning the pestle and mortar, taking recipe notes in the diary even though he is not from art

or engineering back ground, at some times he sacrificed his time in procuring the chemicals from the shop when Mr. Kanniyappan is busy with his other regular official commitments without expecting any returns.

Later Mr. Sampath Iyer motivated Mr. Kanniyappan to do research on other product ranges in art materials and to do product diversification so that this can become a family business and help the children to become entrepreneurs. Mr. Sampath Iyer was with him day and night when he was hospitalized. This friendship lasted till Mr.Kanniyappan's last breath

The samples were made only in ¼" x 1" lengths. These samples were made in larger quantity (all hand made) and distributed among the faculty members and students of Fine Art College for the trial run, free of cost. That was the time in which he received the true comments and appreciation from all his peers and students. Thus the product came in to use in the fine arts college of madras without brand name, price and package. The students, faculties and other artist friends started asking for a sample for their professional work, and this became the stepping stone for the next step.

6. Long journey starts from a small step

The mind mapping of production and plan started. Firstly the plan was to buy electric kiln equipment, which is vital for the process and was specially designed and made to order on request. Having knowledge in ceramics made it easy for him to procure a good product with a right specification and control system; a miniature according to his budget constraints for the mass production. This kiln lasted and supported for more than fifteen years for the continuous production. By this time two of his sons also joined in the Government fine art college Madras and they extended their help occasionally, of course out of compulsion.

After procuring the kiln, the size of the crayon was decided and the die was made according to the international standards. The die was fitted in a toggle press with a half tone fly wheel, which he had already possessed for some purpose. In this juncture the question raised was what to name the product. He decided to name the product was KS^3M^2 –because he felt it seems like a chemical equation and indirectly it is the first letters of himself, his wife, two sons and two daughters. In this brand name the die was made and the chemicals were ground in a pot mill which was designed by him self and fabricated with a half HP motor driven, and then pressed in the toggle press with the help of his sons, students and neighbors. Then fired in the electrical kiln thus the first mass production made successfully.

Mr. Kanniyappan was not only keen in the quality of the product and its use, but also in the physical appearance as well the metallic sound it produced when two pieces of crayons rolled within the palm like Cont'e crayons, which was his inspiration for the research. After the successful production the crayons were distributed among the fine art college faculties, students and to Madras artists. The product was launched in the brand name of KS^3M^2 without bill and package, because the brand was not registered in the prescribed company act rules. But this brand did not lost for long time since Mr. Kanniyappan was not comfortable with the name for emotional reasons and later it was named SUDHA'68, thus named it after, one of his son SUDHAKAR, who passed away in the year 1968, when he was three years old. The brand name SUDHA'68 was registered under the company registration act, TNGST (Tamil Nadu government sales tax) CST (central sales tax), Bank account, Local corporation permission and Electricity connection etc.Thus the first fired black crayons ever produced came in to practice for the first time in Madras, India which sowed a seed for the next step of ever lasting journey.

7. Where there is a will there is a way

Investment and finance management

This is an interesting evidence and example for the people who have the aspiration to become an entrepreneur, having nothing but the knowledge and the desire to work hard. The entire finance from the research to company establishment was met only from his meager salary. Apart from maintaining the family and children's education the remains of his salary was spent only on the research for eight years. After the completion of the research of black crayons the amount was directed to machinery and work shed. Initially the

production started in a small shed measuring 10feet X 12 feet, in which the first tunnel kiln and the pot mill for grinding were constructed. Once after a formal company registration it was a great task for him to manage the finance since it was the time he appointed a person for the regular production and the salary of the person, electricity bill, raw material for the bulk production, over heads and on top of this the machinery research and new products developments were managed only from his salary. After a successful one year completion the account return was filed in the sales tax office, the turnover for the year was Rs:65,000/- and the expenditure was Rs:1,15,000/-. Like this it went for more than three years even after his retirement from the service and until the new product dry pastel were introduced. More than the production cost the money was spent on the over heads and the regular salary for the employee etc.

For further development and the company's sustainability, he had to pool in more money. This was managed by his projects. Besides his regular teaching and product research, he used to do government projects like designing the pavilion for the annual trade fairs and tableaux (including erection).After retirement from the service he started doing projects for the corporate houses which was not happening before. Because, the government service rule does not permit the employee to under take any private projects and generate money. At the age of fifty to sixty three years nearly thirteen years with out any fruit he spent all the money he earned from his project and his retirement benefits were spent only focusing on the sustainability of the company. Because of the faith he had in the product.

For the financial self sustainability, it took more than five years after the company's registration. In fact Mr. Kanniyappan sacrificed completely all his comforts and regular activities to invest in the research and to achieve his goal.

8. New product and product diversification

By this time both of his sons completed their bachelor degrees from the fine arts college, so he was motivated by his friends to think of new material and product range, so they can take care of the business. So, he started the research to discover the range of art materials which were all import substitutes and were not available in India namely Brow crayon, Vandyck brown crayon, White crayon and Dry pastels of 20 shades.(For the above mentioned products till date there is no other Indian brand other than SUDHA'68). It was easy for him to discover the above materials because of the experience he gained while doing the black crayon.

8.1

When the black crayon came in the market, many artists came forward to give the sample of art materials which they were keeping in their personal collections. Some brought the art material samples for him when they traveled abroad. From his peers he received some of the samples like Windsor & Newton's water color which was more than 50 years old, Rembrandt, Caran d'ache and Cont'e. These were the samples used as the bench mark for the quality when he did the research to discover new range of products.

9. Research and developments of indigenous machines

Before purchasing the electric kiln the tunnel kiln was designed with kerosene burner and the cars were fabricated to load the crayons. The kiln was constructed with fire bricks and insulation bricks. Since there was no ready made machines available in the market and particularly for this kind of production, a lot of time was spent since every thing was designed and fabricated by him self. He designed all the appropriate equipments for the production. These designs after fabrication functioned and some times few were malfunctioning. For each and every product; the machines were made in trial and error method. In due course the experience gained from the mistakes, made him to understand, avoid and foresee the troubles in the functional problems, which helped him to eliminate waste of time money and material. Apart from the machines he used to design and fabricate the appropriate furniture's, stands and drying units by self. Some

of the machines he designed were **Label punching unit, thermoforming machine, hand pug mill, pot mill, electric kiln, tunnel kiln, drying units, wood cutting bench saw and motorized extruders.**

9.1	As an artist Mr. Kanniyappan had the great skill in visualizing the machineries and prepares a key sketch for the same. He always prepares the actual engineering drawings before making the equipments and the complete fabrication will be done in his own studio. Only certain spares will be given to a lath work shop for machining.
9.2	For grinding, pot mill was used in the beginning, but in due course the domestic wet grinders were used to get larger quantity. Each grinder had the capacity of two kilos to get in a day. When the sale increased the triple role mill was installed, in which hundreds of kilos are possible to grind for about 3 microns fineness.
9.3	Thermo forming machine was designed for the Indian Ink Cake packaging. In the market the machine was nearly Rs: 2, 00,000/- and the die cost was Rs: 40,000/- this amount was not manageable for him during those times. After about six months of hard work he came up with the idea and designed the machine/die with heating elements from the stove and heating control system attached with a domestic purpose vacuum cleaner which cost him just Rs: 3,000/ + vacuum cleaner.
9.4	An interesting story was, he mostly designed manually operated machines. In the beginning the productions of black crayons were done in a toggle press, but later it was done with a pug mill. Here the pug mill was modified from a hand rotated fruit juice extruder. The fruit juice extruder was brought from a junk shop and unwanted portions were removed then a hole was made in the appropriate place to fix the nozzle. Later with the same technology the indigenous hand extruders were designed and fabricated to increase the production, strengths and shrinkage of the crayon extrusion.

10. Packaging

In terms of packaging for all the products, he self designed the range. Mostly the packaging was designed artistically. He set a complete unit for the box manufacturing. The boxes were made individually for each and every product. The materials for making the box varied from metal sheets to pine wood, aricanut leaf, duplex board and recyclable poly propylene. He made a separate printing unit also. The machines for making wooden box and aricanut leaf embossing hydraulic press were also designed and fabricated. In the packaging he was very keen in using only eco friendly material and all the boxes were hand made in his unit itself.

10.1	In later period, due to mass production of the box, as the sales increased, the boxes were made by reusable poly propylene in the injection molding method. The wrappers were made by duplex board and the graphic designs on it, for all the product were generously done by one of his students, a professional artist and film art director Mr. Bhavani Shankar. Similarly some of the line drawings of Mr. Narendra Babu were taken for the heat emboss on wooden boxes.
10.2	In the very beginning The black crayons were given to a stationery shop in fine art college Madras and distributed to artist and students without packing, but just wrapped in daily news paper. No mater how the packing looks, the consumers accepted the product because of the "Quality".

11. Pricing

Regarding pricing of the product, Mr. Kanniyappan's policy was very simple and unlike the present pricing policy like 30% product cost from the maximum retail price or the skim the cream pricing policy. Very minimal percentage was added as profit when distributed directly to the artists. When it came to dealer's distribution the profit was shared from the same profit, without increasing the product retail price. The price of the product was comparatively ten times lesser than the imported ones. He never worried about the profit and when there were lots of advices to him to increase the price, he was not convinced and he was very content with what he was doing. By and large his aim was that the product should be used by all sorts of people.

12. Marketing

From the day one the marketing was done only by word of mouth. Initially the product was circulated only among the Madras based artists personally, since all the Madras artists were graduates from Fine Arts College and mostly known to Mr. Kanniyappan. The reason behind personal distribution was that no shop keeper (art material dealer) accepted the product to sell, because it was not from a familiar or famous brand. But within two to three years the material was distributed to many artists across the country by him.

Here the advantage was he used to meet almost all the reputed artists from all the states, when he attended the board meeting in Lalith Kala Academy, New Delhi and also in major art seminars, Camps and art festivals. Whenever he traveled he carried some material and distributed them to the artists. The shop keepers still refused to take the material. Because of this he started using a different approach to make the shop keepers accept the product. He selected a few major art dealers in each state and when ever artists ask for the material from different states, he would mention the shop name and address to procure the materials from them. When the consumers go to the shop and ask the material the product won't be there. But brand name and the product registered in the shop keepers minds. Thus the shop keepers started to enquire about the product and the address form the consumers and started procuring the material from the company this in turn made the shop keepers accept the company's product. After this slowly the personal distribution to the artists stopped and the artists started buying the material from the shop. This became a practice among the Madras based artist too.

Further the main dealers were identified and selected from each state and through them the product distributed to the sub dealers. Till date the product is marketed only by word of mouth and not by any means of advertisement, hordings or by printed palm plates. The product sustains only because of its "Quality"

12.1

Due to financial constraints the marketing was done by themselves without any sales representatives. In this situation his younger son went to a very popular art material dealer (stationery shop) in madras city, to introduce the product black crayon. The shop keeper simply refused to see the product and not even respected him even as a window shopper and sent him out immediately without acknowledging neither the product nor the brand, mentioning if they knew the product and can sell they would come to them, and firstly was asked to go out! But it is a fact that they had to sell the same black crayons later without knowing that, it was rejected by them some time back.

12.2

Being an elected board member for two decades in Lalith Kala Academy- New Delhi, he had the privilege to meet artists regularly. KALA MELA (an annual art festival & fair organized by LKA- New Delhi) is one of the great events which helped Sudha'68 product to reach artists. This is where all the Indian artists will be provided a stall to display their work of art for sale and public display. From then on there is no looking back. Kala Mela was not only for professional artists but also for amateur artists, freelance artists, self taught artists and students from various art colleges. In this occasion he met more than eight hundred artists collectively. The Kala Mela was one of the major events to disseminate Sudha'68 product pan India.

13. Conclusion

Genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration – Thomas Alva Edison.

Arise, Awake and Stop not till the goal is reached – Swami Vivekananda.

Though he speaks about philosophy, I really do not know whether Mr. Kanniyappan read the above quote, but he lived to prove the above sayings; one can see lots of books from his collection only related to Arts, Design, Products, Metal works and Ceramics and mostly subject oriented. He is a down to earth person and very close to nature which is evident from his work of art. There are so many incidents about him that can be referred which he followed or handled for the situation and for the growth of the students as a teacher, a business man and in personal life. He was a free man without any frills. Only very few are narrated. From this one can clearly visualize the turbulence he handled and the determination he had, the insults and discouragement he faced, when he was at his early sixties. Many may think this is the time for retiring and to plan for the old age. But people like Mr. Kanniyappan had the guts to take risks and fore saw that it would flourish after his death and live forever.

Presently the company is successfully run by two of his sons and the product range is being expanded by them, with knowledge and experience acquired out of two decades of experience with Mr. Kanniyappan. For the product distribution they have got agencies across the country and export it to neighboring countries. Though it is a small scale industry it provides international quality and used by colleges which has art and design curriculum across the country. And also negotiated by some of the international brands for branding the product. Today Sudha'68 has created employability for the underprivileged woman and the entire company labor system is empowered only by local women's support including production and all kind of machine operations.

14. Acknowledgement

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Belief in Burberry: How a Fashion Business Reinvents its Iconic Status

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Abstract



Dr. Inga Bryden

Dr. Inga Bryden is Reader in Literature and Culture and Head of Research in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Winchester, UK.

Her research interests span visual and material cultures, Victorian to contemporary contexts, and domestic and urban spaces. Publications include *Reinventing King Arthur* (2005); *Domestic Space*, eds (1999) and, more recently, chapters in *Writing the Modern City* (2012) and the *International Encyclopaedia of Housing and Home* (2012).

This paper will focus on the 'iconic' British luxury brand Burberry, founded in 1856 by the dress-maker Thomas Burberry. It will evaluate the manner in which the Burberry brand has utilised and built upon the image and idea of heritage to reinvent itself as a new icon. Significant in this reinvention is a consideration of the religious and spiritual associations of the icon, and how these shape the meanings of iconic in a multidimensional, cultural space. The paper will show how Burberry's iconic status has been used to shape, add value and deliver the experiential qualities of the Burberry brand.

A foundation is set which evaluates the nature of the icon and the meaning of resonance. This is extended to juxtapose the icon in a theological context with a fashion context. The fashion context of the icon helps to explain characteristics of the Burberry 'story' and how their iconic status been represented in their designs. Using digital technologies, Burberry is reaching out to culturally diverse global markets. The nature of their iconic status has to resonate with sometimes disparate groups of consumers. The paper evaluates how Burberry are innovating in product design, communications and in the design of physical space to draw in aspirant consumers to 'worship'. Burberry's business and design thinking is founded upon their heritage. They have been most adept in referencing and extending their iconic status to sustain and enrich the Burberry brand.

Introduction



Dr. Savithri Bartlett

Dr. Savithri Bartlett is Senior Fellow (Knowledge Exchange) at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Winchester.

As a printed textiles designer and researcher, she is concerned with the role of the craftsman in heritage fashion brands and in developing non-linguistic research methods for an art and design audience.

This paper will focus on the 'iconic' British luxury brand Burberry, founded in 1856 by the dress-maker Thomas Burberry. It will evaluate the manner in which the Burberry brand has utilized and built upon the image and idea of heritage to reinvent itself as a new icon. Significant in this reinvention is a consideration of the religious and spiritual associations of the icon, and how these shape the meanings of iconic in a multidimensional, cultural space. The paper will show how Burberry's iconic status has been used to shape, add value and deliver the experiential qualities of the Burberry brand.

Iconic Objects and Resonance

From the Greek *eikon*, a religious icon is a statue or image, a painting or mosaic of a sacred person, each of which may themselves be regarded as sacred. If something is defined as iconic in this sense, it is deemed to have the nature of an image or portrait, usually following a conventional type. Moreover, the notion of an icon (of Christ or the Madonna) in religious art is that it both 'represents and sanctifies' (Blood 2000). Translated to a secular context, the representational function (in different forms of media) is significant. The iconic object gains an emotive power precisely through repetition. Indeed, the familiarity engendered by the repetition of the *image* of the object has what might be termed a *resonance*. This term will be explored further in relation to the power of Burberry's iconic identity.

The theologian Limouris argued that due to the theological vision, all sacred images must introduce us to the realm of the redeemed, the transfigured [and the] sanctified' (1990, p.127). The icon (or iconic artifact) is symbolic of the boundary between the sensual and the spiritual worlds. Through contemplation of, or reflection upon, the iconic, the viewer is invited to 'celebrate the communion of individuals' (Quenot, p. 48). In other words, through the iconic the individual is brought together with others identifying with the same symbol; a sense of shared community is created amongst beholders of the brand. The 'quality' of experience is important here, if (profound) experience is in constant flux between the beholder (viewer) and the icon, through the act of contemplation.

Keywords: Burberry, Icon, Resonance, Globally Diverse Consumers, Aspirant Consumers, Design and Iconic Status, Reinvention, Heritage, Lifestyle Store

The Icon in Fashion

Outside a strictly theological context the icon (which in the case of Burberry, would primarily be a garment but could also include accessories, forms of merchandising, stores, websites, promotional images, celebrity endorsing the brand) can become an art object with aesthetic and market values. This is partly why the *experiential qualities* of the Burberry brand are so crucial to its iconic status: they allow the prospect of the 'beholder' being transfigured into the active, loyal (faithful) customer who purchases items not just once, but over a period of time. The image of the brand is devised, arguably, to give the impression that something ineffable (invisible, intangible) has been revealed and made manifest.

There is a long tradition of interaction between religion, popular culture and material culture. In her introduction to *Religion, Media and the Marketplace*, Clark (2007) neatly uses the concept of the 'fashion bible' to illustrate this merging and as an example of how a material artifact from the fashion context can be a focus for (religious) reflection, meditation and ritual use. The 'fashion bible' can represent an object that has iconic status, promoting identification with a group and a sense of belonging.

The sense of 'belonging', created by Burberry particularly through the marketing of heritage and British cultural identity, is also conditioned by the space(s) in which the icon is situated, or where the iconic is constructed. Removed from an overtly sacred space, the icon may be stripped of its religious meaning yet gain in socio-cultural significance. For example, Pechurina (2011) has investigated contemporary responses to the iconic through her research into 'typical' or iconic Russian home possessions which are often found in migrants' homes. In the domestic setting the iconic object becomes part of complex processes that involve multiple social relationships, meanings and practices.

Similarly, the development of an individual garment (such as the Burberry trench coat) as an iconic image, and by extension, the iconic dimension of a fashion business like Burberry, occurs in multidimensional space. Through visual and printed media; online presence; events (such as store openings and fashion shows), and architect-designed stores, a particular object circulates in transnational semiotic spaces where it indexes the brand. The iconic object is both 'typical' and acquires fluid and multiple meanings.

By the mid-1980s, as Campbell and Schroeder (2011) pointed out, researchers were in agreement that cultural objects were 'multi-modal'; they had textual and visual components. The power of an icon to a fashion brand comes from these components, though it can be enhanced further (as Burberry has done) through the *textural* and the *experiential*.

Iconic Burberry

Before considering the experiential qualities of the Burberry brand, exemplified in the space of the store, it is worth acknowledging that Burberry makes explicit reference to itself as iconic in a number of ways. The Burberry company website has a 'Bespoke' section where you can 'create an *iconic* trench coat to your personal specifications', designing it online to be 'individually crafted'. In the summer of 2012, Burberry Beauty launched its *Iconic* Nudes limited edition: a highlighting makeup compact giving a 'luminous sheen' and 'lip mists'. With both these examples the emphasis is on the possibility of transformation (transfiguration) for the individual customer, who is given agency in this process.

Under the 'Experiences' tab on the Burberry website (<http://uk.burberry.com/store>) the viewer/listener enters a world of urban spaces, architectural structures, shadows and glistening rain. A series of short black-and-white 'narrative' films, including one named 'The Icons', represents the main autumn/winter 2012 campaign. Each of the filmic scenarios sets a man and a woman in the shadows of Classical buildings, moving through London streets characterized by lamplight, mist and storms. However, 'The Icons' is notably different in that the models are static, posed on grand steps. Whilst the Icons in question could be the long and mid-length cotton gabardine trench coats worn by the pair, the statue-like models can also be read as iconic. They are iconic in the sense of embodying glamour and an 'ideal' to aspire to, since the pose is reminiscent of the statue as an object of desire crafted by the artist. [e.g. Sir John Tenniel's *Pygmalion and the Statue*, 1878]. Furthermore, the viewer is invited to contemplate the icon, as close-up shots linger on the movement of droplets of water on fabric. With the website, and the 'experiences' in particular, the company



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arguably succeeds in recreating itself as a nostalgic, British, yet also contemporary icon. The pieces or garments shown function individually and together as 'A Collection'. Cabrera and Frederick (2010, p.4) observed that 'a fashion collection must be driven by an idea that transcends material reality'. This can be interpreted in relation to the iconic: Burberry has created a concept which involves each design element, but which simultaneously moves beyond the level of the individual garment, in the way that an icon (in a religious context) symbolizes the bridge between the material and the spiritual.

The potential or actual Burberry customer is then, encouraged to adopt the role of aspirant. As the *Observer* style writer Lauren Laverne (2012) commented from the 2012 London Fashion Week, Burberry showed '*relentless perfection... pieces of an uncompromising, almost pitiless beauty... impossible to imagine on an ordinary body, in the actual world.*' The emphasis on the exalted and unattainable reinforces the notion of the iconic, further bolstered by Burberry's marketing of the trench coat as an icon associated with history and heritage, and with explorers who wore the coat '*while pushing the boundaries of human experience*' (Burberry Foundation Vision Statement).

Shaping and Adding Value to the Burberry Brand

As a brand Burberry is largely defined as iconic due to its longevity or heritage (particularly in outerwear), and to a notion of 'authenticity' which comes with that. This is made explicit in the 'Heritage' section of the company website, which displays a timeline and images of individuals wearing Burberry, notably explorers such as Major F.G. Jackson, Sir Ernest Shackleton and Roald Amundsen, and the aviator Claude Grahame-White. Burberry supplied clothes and tents for a number of polar expeditions. The company has clearly built on the image and idea of heritage to reinvent its iconic status. It has done this through emphasizing the experiential dimension of the brand; here, the link with individual adventurers known for heroic exploits. A direct parallel with the contemporary is drawn by the company's charitable Foundation (established in 2008) which aims to help 'young people navigate the uncertain terrain of their age' and 'empower them to realize their dreams' (Burberry Foundation Vision Statement). At the same time the outerwear garments, associated throughout the history of Burberry with action (riding a motorbike, skiing) and exemplified in the trench coat, are reinvented with a twist.

Burberry's iconic adaptation and reinvention has occurred in a variety of culturally significant ways. They have extended their reach and aspirational status to a culturally diverse global audience. They have achieved this through innovative design (their spring/summer 2013 collection showed trench coats in minimal white, neon pink and electric blue), through creative visual and design experiences in stores and in the application of engaging digital technology. Examples of this include: 'followers' (or even worshipers) being shown the menswear and womenswear collections on Tweetwalk (in partnership with Twitter) prior to runway shows and then fashion shows that are live-streamed. Participation in events such as *Vogue* Fashion Night Out create the impression that luxury brands are increasingly democratized. This helps the brand to reach out and 'teach' their iconic values to a new and younger audience. On 6 September 2012 Burberry presented in Paris as part of the fourth annual *Vogue* Fashion Night Out by celebrating its iconic trench coat as part of the Art of the Trench event, a display of photographs of anonymous individuals wearing their 'cut' of the trench and an invitation to people to upload photographs of themselves wearing a Burberry trench to artofthetrench.com. The aim of Art of the Trench, (a collaborative project with image makers such as Scott Schuman of *The Sartorialist* and 'iconic' Magnum photographers), was to 'create a living document of the trench coat and the people who wear it' (artofthetrench.com).

Utilizing virtual and physical spaces creatively, Burberry has added value to the experiential qualities of its brand. With the reproduction (and reinterpretation through the juxtaposition of different color combinations) of the fashion house's distinctive check pattern across clothes, accessories, beauty products and fragrances, and in multi-media form, the iconic tartan gains a cultural resonance precisely through its familiarity. However, the ubiquity of an iconic pattern can backfire. In the early 2000s Burberry check products (and fake goods) were adopted by a new British social grouping termed 'Chavs' and Burberry responded by reducing the visibility of its check (*The Money Programme*, 2005). Burberry also learned that in certain parts

of the world, the concept and relevance of the 'Chav' was meaningless. Their distinctive check represented the conspicuous consumption values demanded of a culturally diverse global consumer base, especially the younger and more prosperous consumer in developing economies. As Burberry has embraced a globally diverse consumer base, they have responded with distinctive designs and shopping experiences, all underpinned with a sense of their distinctive style and heritage.

Physical Space and the Icon

Wherever Burberry consumers are located, their expectation of shopping to be a 'brand experience' is a familiar notion. This belief is seen in the role of the built and designed space, i.e. the physical store. This sense of designed space can be seen from the exterior context, in the location and aesthetic appeal to draw consumers (or worshippers) and the interior design where the 'curation' of goods may be crafted. A sense of designed space has been fundamental in 'relaunching' British luxury brands. An example of this can be seen in the creation of the 'lifestyle house', such as Asprey's store in London's New Bond Street. Other examples include the gentleman's outfitters Hackett's new concept store in Spitalfields (providing a bar and billiards space) and Alfred Dunhill's Bourdon House in Mayfair (offering a barber, spa and screening room) (Gonsalves, 2012). Burberry's development of its iconic status should be seen in this context, where visiting and spending time in the architect and interior-designed store is transformed into an experience. This is both a retail and a branding concept.

In the chapter 'The Store is Star' in *Fashion Brands*, Tungate (2012, p. 61) provides useful historical underpinning for the changing aesthetic of the store. A boutique such as Le Bon Marche in Paris is emblematic of the way in which, in the nineteenth century, the interior spaces of stores were being opened up and huge windows created to facilitate tempting displays of goods. The result was a 'veritable cathedral of commerce', a description which draws attention to the religious associations of the iconic, the experience of shopping as a spiritual process, and the creation of a sacred space. Interestingly, the firm of Gustave Eiffel was consulted in 1870 over the structure of Le Bon Marche. Continuing with the notion of potentially awe-inspiring spaces for the customer, the Printemps department store underwent a refurbishment in 2009 which included a spectacular atrium where 'visitors now find their gaze drawn upwards' (*ibid*, p.63) as they might in a place of religious worship. Fashion and luxury brands that compete in a global context are having to create within their stores the 'most immense, sense-scrambling spaces' (*ibid*, p.66). These are curated spaces where it is even possible to have marketing without the logo. Tungate gives the example of Prada making its name invisible in stores, a perceptive move which underscores the visitor ('guest's') freedom not to shop.

Space to Worship Burberry

Burberry's Chief Creative Officer Christopher Bailey, (who is responsible for the brand's overall image), has overseen the design and development of their 4,087 square meter behemoth store at 121 Regent Street, London. The building, constructed by John Nash in 1820, under the patronage of the Prince Regent, has housed livery stables and a cinema in its 200-year history. The street cuts through the city's historic clothing district and skirts famous thoroughfares such as Savile Row and Bond Street.

The street entrance is in itself seductive. Passing pedestrians are beckoned by the haunting lyrics "I can't breathe, and I can't smile" of *Marina & The Diamonds*, which encapsulate the price of stardom. A 22-foot tall video screen and hydraulic stage stand in the vast stained glass domed atrium, transforming the shop floor into a theatre for talks, 3D streaming of live fashion shows and performances by Ren Harvieu and Roo Panes, Burberry's growing roster of young British talent. For now, grainy black and white film footage of Sir Alan Cobham's Burberry-kitted flight from London to Cape Town in 1920 fills the screen; jubilant crowds are seen gathering around their hero.

The store has 4 floors, 25 staircases, 17 fitting rooms and 24,000 individual pieces for sale. The ground floor accommodates the lower-priced Burberry Brit range whilst Burberry London with its iconic trench coats, well cut dresses, suits, jackets, shirts and trousers occupies the first floor. The high-priced Burberry

Prorsum collection is hung in the 'inner sanctuary' of oak paneled rooms, on the top story, with en-suite bathrooms, deep pile carpets and luxurious sofas. Here the store is transformed through digital technology to create shopping as an immersive and transformative experience; a secular version of a spiritual journey. Clothing is embedded with radio-frequency identification (RFID) chips. As a visitor enters the womenswear fitting room, the mirror turns into a screen showing a film of the garment as worn by Cara Delevingne on the catwalk. The craftsmanship (stitch, weave, molding) and accessories (ruched belt with gilded fox's head) that compliment the item of clothing are shown. The Store Champion (supervisor) explains that the English countryside has been a popular theme in this season's collection. Store associates are on standby, with iPads in tow, to download a client's past purchases and search for stock online, blending the bricks and mortar physical world with the digital. There are no till points, and transactions are unhurried and discreet (U. Choroszkiewicz, Personal interview, 27 December 2012).

The visitor is introduced to the limited edition (156 numbered bottles) of Burberry Body scent encased in hand-blown French Baccarat crystal to celebrate the founding of Burberry in 1856. At £1760 per bottle, the beguiling scent of rose essence with tonka beans to deepen the tones of green absinthe, peach, iris, rose absolute, warm sandalwood, a base of cashmeran, vanilla and musk is a collectable item for the few (Burberry, 2012). As the sales associate informs you the 156th bottle is reserved in the archives of Burberry's Horseferry House for future generations.

The immersive nature of 'being' in the Burberry store means that experiences are made memorable for the individual, a move beyond thinking of goods as tangible and services as intangible. This is the experience economy (a term coined in a 1998 article for the Harvard Business Review (Pine and Gilmore, 2011, p.17)) where customers (or perhaps more aptly, followers or worshipers) value being engaged by what the company reveals over a duration of time.' In this sense Burberry creates a sensual experience which is also inherently personal; the individual is engaged on an 'emotional, physical, intellectual, or even spiritual level' (Pine and Gilmore, 2011, p.17). Fanciful though it might sound, it could be suggested that whilst the labor behind the experience 'disappears', the possibility of the individual being translated to another plane is made visible or manifest. Indeed, the mobilized and virtual gaze is crucial to this process.

Conclusion

Burberry clearly recognize the nature and power of their iconic status. They also recognize that the representation of their iconic status is not 'fixed' but has to grow, and be reinforced to endure. This is particularly challenging given their growing global reach, the diversity of their consumer base and in engaging new consumers of a younger age profile. Taking account of the religious and spiritual associations of the icon can add value to a brand. This can occur in experiential design of many facets of a brand and the resultant relationship consumers have with those designs. This paper has illustrated how the Burberry brand (with explicit intent or not) has adopted religious and spiritual associations of the icon, to great effect.

Robert Blood (1997, p. 83), from the perspective of communication management, offered a model of 'emotional transmission' through icons (which arouse verbal and visual associations, and memories). His model suggested that the iconic status of a brand, and the icons it has at its disposal, are tools for mobilizing and changing public opinion. For the globally diverse aspirant customer, the autonomous subject(s) of the Burberry experience (in its 'totality' or in the immersive spectacle of a particular store) are underpinned by an interpretation of their heritage, which is rich in iconic status. With the translation of the 'dead' object into the 'being' of experience, the latter sticks in the consumer's memory over time. The process, aided by the ministrations of angels (store managers and staff), enriches the brand, and can occur across generations. In other words, this presents a long-term business strategy whereby belief (by all stakeholders) in the brand signifies sustainability. It is particularly apt that the Burberry Equestrian Knight Logo developed in 1901 includes the Latin word *Prorsum* – meaning 'forwards'.

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Brands and Icons: Beyond Metro Boundaries

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Abstract

The fast growing markets in India's Tier 2 and Tier 3 Towns and rural areas are evolving into the new & important Consumption Centers. These emerging markets are the new playgrounds for apparel and fashion brands; and they also provide new vistas to fashion designers for business. Their apparent newness also makes them uncertain markets. Building brands in these markets thus poses a unique set of challenges.

Emerging Indian markets in Tier 2 & 3 Towns are seeing a surge in terms of consumption. The menswear market, especially in these towns is growing by leaps and bounds. There is a change in the consumption patterns in these towns due to changes in social, economic and technological conditions. Towns that were once looked upon as the 'country cousins' to the 'urban metros' are now big markets for fashion industry. This paper explores and identifies factors that are the differentiators for menswear fashion in these emerging markets. This challenging scenario provides a platform for creative brand building, with innovative Icons.

The Sport Stars and Film Stars from such towns are representatives of the consumers of these markets. Such Icons are living examples of the moods, opinions and wants of the consumers. A Fashion Icon that will best represent the dreams, hopes and aspirations of the fashion consumer would need to be the focal point. An Icon, with whom they can relate, who belongs to them and embodies their outlook of life. A study was undertaken to identify the needs and patterns of purchase in these towns, both from designers and consumers. This paper aims to identify the Icons that will create and nurture the demand for fashion. It will explore social, economical & psychological drivers, discuss the challenges of these markets and also study consumer behavior to identify opportunities for various stakeholders of the fashion ecosystem.

Introduction

"Take care to be born well." — George Bernard Shaw

Uncertain global economic conditions are presenting challenges to fashion designers and brands alike as the urban consumers' expenditure on fashion reduced. India, on the other hand, with its surging young population is a haven for Fashion Brands across the globe that are keen to open stores in the fast developing retail areas, malls and other shopping avenues. In the last decade, several global fashion brand has opened its stores in India from Tommy Hilfiger, Armani, Hugo Boss, Versace, Paul Smith to Zara, the latest one being Kenneth Cole. These global brands are in addition to an ever growing number of domestic designers and volume market.

The questions that arise are whether Indian markets are insulated from economic uncertainty? Are Indian consumers still spending sufficiently large amounts to make fashion a profitable business? Does it make any sense for global brands, to 'open shops' in India, in this climate of economic meltdown? The fact is, when most of the European and American economies faced one of the worst scenarios in 2009, the Indian economy and thereby the Indian producer and consumer was protected This could attributed to India's economic stability or the economy being largely independent of the other economies by virtue of India being a large consumer for its own produce. However, in the year 2012 it has been observed that Indian consumers are not spending as much as market/businesses would have hoped/expected them to spend. The consumers in India generally shop during the major festivals in months of October - November. During peak shopping seasons in 2012, markets saw a decline in percentage of sales of both hard and soft goods, indicating a clear reluctance of consumers to spend.

Keywords: Fashion and Apparel, Menswear, Fashion Icon, Emerging Markets, Design, Trends, Brands

The consumer base in metros has been growing, but the market size is not increasing in proportion to the number of brands and designers who are opening new stores. As a result Indian designers and brands have started targeting smaller cities from where a sufficient number of customers travel to a nearby metro city to shop for their products and services.

This paper focuses on the menswear market in India and the upsurge in the demand for fashion products in the menswear category primarily coming from the emerging markets in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. The paper researches if brands are important in these cities and identifies the factors that are to be kept in mind by brands to choose the icons to best represent their brands for these markets particularly for the menswear category. Over the last decade, a trend towards individuality has taken root in society. This personal image influences how individuals feel about themselves; how they react to others and what consumers define as a good fit in apparel.

Changes in Indian markets

India, in the last decade, has seen its Tier 2 & 3 towns, as well as its rural landscape emerging as new consumption centers. The average age of Indian population today is about 25 years and is estimated to be 29 years in 2020 making the Indian market: a 'youth dominated' one. These young consumers present a major opportunity for the fashion and lifestyle products. They are well in tune with the global trends. Brands like Hindustan Lever and ITC have used these opportunities to open new format retail outlets in tier 2 and 3 towns, that are less formidable /intimidating, and provide goods and services to these new emerging markets.

The emergence of these new markets can be attributed to the factors enumerated below, and some of the drivers that may have contributed to this change are:

- **Infra-structural environment improvements** in terms of building of new roads. The expressways connecting cities, popular for business or tourist attractions, have given an impetus for growth in new townships. Some of these were small villages, which, with increased traffic are seeing the rise of markets and malls, roadside eating joints, giving a boost to the local economy. These are the new portals that give exposure to the local population, leading to a surge in demand for products that customers in these markets may not have been familiar with, or even be in need of. Connectivity in terms of the internet, mobiles and television has provided additional platforms for information, exposing alternative ways of life and living; which has given a further impetus to increase in the demand. The local populace is motivated to aspire for an urbane lifestyle. Rural areas especially those, that are close to the metro cities have benefitted due to improved infrastructure. It has resulted in an unprecedented increase in demand & price of land. This in turn, caused farmers to sell their lands to big corporates or Government for further infrastructure development, and thus, created a new moneyed class in these areas of a section of population; who otherwise would have remained, financially backward. This has created a class of consumers with disposable income, but who have no tradition of consumerism or, have had no opportunity or exposure to luxury.
- **Education** – With exposure to new media and increased awareness about the societal changes as well as growth, has made people in these towns realize a need for higher education. These towns which traditionally may not have had avenues or even aspirations for higher education now seek it by traveling to larger cities for higher education. Through close interaction and association with students of metros or larger cities, they get exposure and thus fuel a demand for new/multi-functional products/ fashion products.
- **Employment** – Traveling for employment outside these Tier 2 & 3 towns has also introduced the population to different perspectives and ideologies thereby leading to changes in lifestyles, resulting in a demand spurt and changing consumption patterns of the individual and their families. Their consumption patterns influencing the local consumption as aspiration of 'living abroad', 'earning well' and even 'to dress in similar styles' is now a common occurrence.
- **Technology** – has been a major driver in bringing about changes in consumption patterns. Exposure to the social media on Internet has provided a platform for exchange of ideas and imbibing new ideologies.

A heightened awareness of the way peers dress in other parts of the world and even in other parts of the country has created the aspirational demand for products and apparel categories for which there may be no local need. (Narang *et al*, 2012)

The emerging markets in India – the Tier 2 & 3 towns are witnessing a surge in consumption. There is a dramatic shift in the consumption patterns. On 30th August 2012, 'Times of India' reported that the rural consumption in India is growing at 19% while the urban consumption is growing at 17%. With much more money in circulation in the Tier 2 & 3 towns and rural areas (as a result of real estate transactions), employment patterns have been changing from being essentially agriculture dependent to being employed in new services and industries. This has brought about a change in the social and cultural ethos of the population. Changes in state and local level governance with regional politics taking center-stage have also had a great impact. These changes have been varied, unique and unprecedented, bringing with them changes in demands, consumption patterns, design aesthetics and aspiration in all aspects of their lives.

Exposure to new world through social media networks, television soaps, and Bollywood films are a major influence on the consuming population in these towns. The recent increase in soaps and films being made with the Tier 2 & 3 towns as the backdrop, clearly exhibits a major connect for business. The protagonists of these shows, the way they dress, talk, eat, and the cars and gadgets they use, influence the consumption decisions of the consumers in these markets.

Emerging sports stars from these Tier 2 & 3 towns have brought attention and focus to these new towns & centers, and, have self-belief/esteem among the population. Geeta and Ritu Phogat, the two wrestling sisters from a small town in the state of Haryana, have opened unimaginable opportunities for women, not only in their own village but also the neighboring ones. These girls have become an Icon and Pride of their village. The contribution of Pathan brothers, the national cricket stars, has been immense for Baroda city. The increased attention to these towns is vindicated from the number of Bollywood movies being set in the backdrop of smaller & once forgotten areas, as well as, being made on, issues of these areas. The same is also true for television soaps, which once ignored these areas and were largely based in metropolitan cities. "India is a country where people worship celebrities, and treat them as God. Companies and brands invest huge amounts to align their products with celebrity endorsements". (Rawtani, 2010)

Apparel is an essential item for consumption, and its choice is influenced by factors like fashion trends and social status. Demand for apparel is influenced by brands, icons, logos, mascots, advertisements, markets and peer groups, which tends to impact buying power of consumers. Ready-to-wear apparel finds negligible competition from bespoke tailoring, factory shops and homemade clothing. The online presence of men's fashion outlets is growing rapidly. These towns and rural areas were studied and researched through survey and interviews aimed to understand the factors which the 'brands' should consider for branding as well as designing, when the target audience is male consumers from these areas.

Indian Menswear Market

The menswear market is sizeable; according to Technopak 'Report on Textile and Apparel 2012' Menswear contributes 43% of the Indian market. A 2008 report: 'Booming Menswear market in India' (King *et al*, 2008, 2010) found that the Indian men's apparel industry was expected to grow at a CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) of 14.86 % from 2008 to 2010. In 2014, the Indian menswear market is estimated to have a value of \$16.2 billion, an increase of 36.1% since 2009.

- According to Technopak Report 2012

The Indian textile and apparel market size was estimated to be Rs 2, 73, 000 crores (USD 58 billion) in 2011 and is projected to grow at 9% CAGR to Rs 6,64,000 crores (USD 141 billion) by 2021.

- The consumer wardrobe has changed from only 'need-based clothing' to 'occasion specific dressing' and is gradually becoming more 'detail oriented'.

- India's total textile and apparel industry size (Domestic + Exports) was estimated to be Rs 4, 18, 000 crores (USD 89 billion) in 2011 and is projected to grow at a CAGR of 9.5% to reach Rs 10, 50,000 crores (USD 223 billion) by 2021.
- The growth in the apparel segment will primarily be driven by the growth in modern retail.
- Keen competition is driving international brands to adopt 'Made for India' models leading to higher acceptance and thus increased share from around 18% in 2011 to 25% over the next five years. Marketline report of February 2012 states:
 - India menswear market grew by 8.1% in 2011 to reach \$ 3.4 billion in value
 - It forecasts that in 2016 this market despite deceleration will grow by 21.4% from 2011.

According to a Technopak report of 2010 on Indian Retail, menswear was still the single largest product category both in terms of value and volume. Men's formal suits jackets and blazer segment were valued at Rs 48.3 billion in 2009 and had witnessed a rapid shift from tailored garments to ready-to-wear.

The Indian Menswear Market Report 2009 had pointed that India accounts for 11% of the Asia-Pacific menswear market value and that the demand for readymade garments in rural India was forecasted to surge at a CAGR of 16.5 percent and reach Rs. 42918 crores by 2010. It also stated that Branded apparel industry for men was expected to grow at 24 percent CAGR and gross over Rs 25,000 crore by 2010. A Data monitor report forecasts that menswear will grow at CAGR of 11% till 2020.

Brands and Branding

In today's world every one is brand conscious, consumers are willing to pay more for a product if it is 'Branded'. Brands and branding are, all encompassing and ubiquitous today (Wally Olins, 2008). A brand's icon is, its identity, a visual connect with outside world & its customers, and it also creates an emotional bond, as well as reflects the desired image & brand positioning. Some brands have mascots as their icons; some have their CEOs as the face of their brand, while others have characters that they have created as their icons. All these represent character of the brand; they in a way bring a set of values, a message. According to Millward Brown POV, "Icons: You know them, when you see them, a brand with powerful visual cue has an intrinsic advantage over other brands and all iconic brands have deep cultural roots." (Hollis, 2007). Their personalities reflect the brand. When choosing an icon or mascot to be the face of the brand, one must remember that their actions and activities would directly reflect on the brand. They represent the essence of the brand, the brand's core.

The brand icon or mascot has to be chosen very carefully keeping in mind the desirable image for a long period of time and remains important even after five to ten years. If the CEO, who's the brand icon, leaves the company or a Sport star for poor performance falters in public image or the film star loses public adulation, if the films fail at the box office or the star gets into legal trouble; the brand suffers. Marc Gobe in his book 'Emotional Branding' says that in today's highly competitive environment no business can afford to neglect five senses and further states that "carefully crafted sensory appeals can create that consumer preference that distinguishes a brand amidst a sea of competing commodities." Brands play a critical role to establish its visibility and position in international markets. It needs a strong structure to leverage in new markets, and this can be achieved by corporate endorsements to create reliable corporate image. (Douglas, Craig, & Nijssen, 2001)

According to Wally Ollins, if 1980's 'Brand' was a fast moving product on supermarket shelf, today the 'Corporate Personality' or soul of the organization is the corporate brand. Branding or creating a brand image is a complex, multi-faceted and multi-disciplinary process that is consecutively and simultaneously a resource for design, communication and marketing which is visible and tangible to all stakeholders of the organization. In today's multinational marketplace it is important to understand consumer preference for global brands over local brands. (Steenkamp, Batra, & Aldon, 2003)

Another important aspect according to Olins, is the product and image of the product very important, an apt example is Apple products, which are expected to look beautiful and perform at the highest level, so all Apple products help both to define and reinforce the brand. An Armani jacket is required to fit and look beautiful, that is the brand image or consumer expectation.

Terri Graham, CMO of Jack in the Box, on how the brand created and managed its 15-year-old Jack campaign says, “The initial idea for creating ‘Jack’ was not, to create an icon, it was really the public that established that he was an icon. We created him 15 years ago; looking back, what helped his longevity was that we created a character with lot of dimension, and that he is a very believable character and customers have a relationship with Jack. So he has great credibility with customers” (Graham, 2010). This is something that every brand manager aspires from his Icon that customers develop a long term and steady relationship with the Icon.

In ‘How to Create a Cohesive Brand Experience’ at American Express open forum, Dawn Reiss said “Design is a visual experience” and Karl Ziemer of Karlfred Design: “You don’t want to do what’s been done to death. You have to find a way to balance the equation of an established business and a new identity.” Selecting an icon to represent fashion brand is a tightrope walk and especially in emerging markets where there are no established consumption patterns, consumer are unsure of what they want, there are no defined paths of tradition to follow. According to Brian Phipps, in an article Brands Create Customers, “It is pretty clear- if not shockingly obvious. We are in the midst of a tectonic shift in the nature of brands.” According to him, a brand that sets itself high above customers, separates itself from the customer input in energy and direction; and can easily fall. (Phipps, 2012)

Men As Consumers

Historically, the men’s apparel market in India has been significantly larger than women’s apparel market (Talukdar, 2011), this is because majority of Indian women even today, prefer wearing the traditional saris; though younger generation in metros and even in smaller towns, is increasingly adopting fusion wear or western wear. India’s apparel market is in the throes of change (Vasudev, 2010). Rapid growth and rising urbanization have spawned a new class of consumers with more money to spend, and a growing passion for fashion. As men’s taste grows more sophisticated, they are providing a new avenue for much needed growth in the industry. At one time, the Indian market for menswear comprised primarily of three basic categories: casual, working clothes and occasion wear. However, with new interests and a broader range of activities, also with an increased demand for clothing, men are spending more on clothing and are embracing the idea of fashion as a form of self expression, rather than merely as a functional purchase (Talukdar, 2011). Exclusive men’s fashion week was launched in London in 1998 (Bakewell *et al*, 2006) and India men’s fashion week in 2009. Leading international retailers including H&M, Top man, Mango and New Look have opened exclusive men’s only stores.

Apparel

The modern menswear range includes shirts, jackets, suits, trousers, jeans and t-shirts. The Indian market is also becoming home to fusion wear, even as it sees a huge spurt in occasion wear. Indian traditional menswear ranges from kurtas, achkans and bandgalas (Vasudev, 2010).

In underdeveloped and comparatively poorer rural regions, this range of options may be absent and branding irrelevant, with the basic necessity of functional clothing - the sole concern. Nevertheless, in more affluent areas clothes are often perceived as intimately linked to lifestyle and social status, which grants retailers the opportunity to influence consumer behavior and drive the price range upwards. With most forms of modern media penetration by marketing icons and images, the buyer is significantly exposed to this force, leading to identity creation through perception and thus creating ‘demand’. Even India’s conservative formal wear market is seeing a change. A study by Paul Smith, the London-based designer brand, has found that demand has shifted from simple business wear to lifestyle, with formal wear which is more occasion-based. Occasion wear is one of the biggest apparel categories in India getting a leg-up

from the 'Big Fat Indian Wedding', a market segment which is growing despite depression or recession by several folds.

Another interesting aspect is: the changing face of the Indian Consumer. The Indian Consumers for this decade can be classified as (Source: Technopak Report):

Technology Babies – 8-19yrs, Impatient Aspirers – 20-25yrs, Balance Seekers – 26-50yrs

In terms of consumer groups, the Indian market is now seeing a new structure with 5 consumer groups (Source: ORG-Marg):

'The Rich', 'The Consuming Class', 'The Climber', 'The Aspirant' & 'The Destitute.'

The largest consumer groups currently are the 'Consuming class' and the 'Climber' with nearly 75 million households in each of them. While urban India is 'value driven', rural India at present, is 'Volume Driven'. General market segmentation for these emerging markets becomes difficult, as products would reflect a local taste amalgamating with other influences.

Market Study

Based on these defined aspects of the consumer groups, a survey was done on a sample chosen from population identified with the following characteristics – Male consumers from tier 2 and 3 towns / rural India, in the age group of 16-60, educated, enjoyers, brand conscious and image oriented. The sample group selected was administered a questionnaire to find factors which affect their buying decisions, what their aspirations are, their needs, preference & influences on actual purchases. The data collected was analyzed which provided choices of brand icons designs, style directions and factors that need to be considered while exploring business opportunities in these emerging markets.

The respondents were asked to list in order of priority what attracts them to a brand. It emerged that the first factor is that 'Face of the Brand'. The Brand Ambassador and the look associated with the brand is next important thing. The respondents were asked to prioritize the parameters kept in mind while purchasing apparel. The analysis listed these factors in the order of preference. It emerges that the 'Brand Icons' influenced the decisions and especially what they bought and from which brand they bought from.

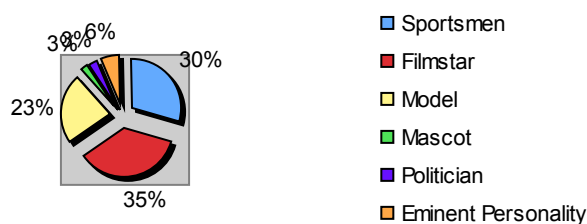


Fig 1: Influences of brand face on buying decisions

The same was corroborated through structured interview with four designers who have a large clientele base in 2 and 3 tier towns. Mr. Raghavendra Rathore a well known Indian designer has a huge following in metros as well as pan India; he has a dedicated label called 'Club Jodhpur' for the non-metro cities. According to him, the trends in non-metro towns is regional and a 'Brand' or 'Designer' needs to keep in mind these sentiments and issues in focus, both while designing as well as while marketing the Brand.

Mr. Manish Tripathi is the CEO of 'AntarDesi', with a clientele ranging from Bollywood film stars, politicians and also have a large client base in several 2 and 3 tier towns of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. He stated that the consumers come to his stores and specifically demand for clothes worn by the Bollywood Stars.

Mr. Fahad Farouqui a designer based in Delhi whose label 'Mosaic' has a large client base in states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and in Andhra Pradesh, on being asked who would be the face of his Brand,

said that for small towns he would choose a different face for each of the states. He said to promote his new styles, his choice for the 'face of the brand', would be a sports personality, especially a Cricketer as cricket is a 'national religion' in India. For promotion of his brand in state of Uttar Pradesh, he would take cricketer Praveen Kumar: a local hero, for MP, he would choose one of Pathan Brothers i.e. cricketers Irfan or Yousf Pathan. For Andhra Pradesh, he would choose another local sport celebrity. He further added that clients in metros generally want/ prefer an international look and are influenced by Hollywood Stars but clients from tier 2 & 3 cities look upto Bollywood stars/ Indian regional Cine Stars and local sports stars, especially cricketers.

Mr. Suraj Kumar who works in city of Patna and has client base in states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, also prefers personalities who can influence the purchase decisions of clientele.

The survey established that the clients bought garments from brands which they perceived as most fashionable. This decision was largely influenced by the Brand Icon or Face of the Brand. Some clients said that they bought the clothes of a particular brand simply because they liked/admired the person who was showcased wearing the garment in the advertisements/promos. The feel of the fabric of the garment emerged as the next important factor for their decision followed by price, color and details for decisions. Fit and Craftsmanship were the least important factors, while making purchase decisions.

Tripathi, went on to add that the fabric feel should be luxurious and the consumers feel that they are paying for the fabric though Craftsmanship and Fit does not matter much. According to both Farouqui and Tripathi, embellishments in terms of embroidery, which some seasons ago, were considered important for Indian consumer, even for menswear, are slowly being replaced by details like patch pockets, zippers, and color blocking. This has also been corroborated by Technopak Report of 2012 that "The consumer wardrobe has changed from only need-based clothing to occasion specific dressing and is gradually becoming more detail oriented". The designers also said that these consumers are looking for one stop shop and want advice on accessories including shoes, watches and bags to go with the outfit. Maximum shopping is for occasion wear, jackets and suits are generally bought for weddings or events.

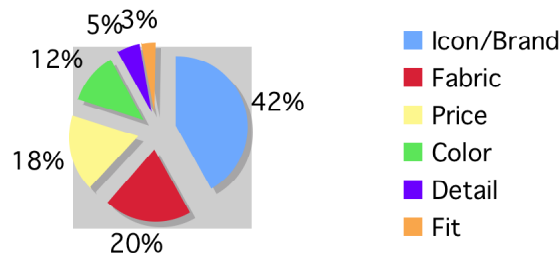


Fig 2: Parameters in terms of importance while purchasing Menswear

According to Rathore, the Indian market is far more 'kind' to the designers and brands than the markets in London and New York and generally give a second chance to designers and brands to correct mistakes in the next season. He feels that one can establish a brand in India quite successfully in three seasons, as the time is adequate to gauge the market correctly. He feels that though consumers want similar silhouettes. They also look for new colours and variety in garment details. Suraj stressed on the importance of fabric and price as being the primary concern for customers. According to him, his clients look for complete ensembles.

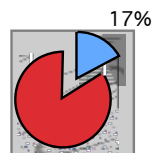


Fig 3: Purchase preferences of consumers

On issues of 'Silhouette', it emerged that though the majority of the consumers prefer classic styles, yet, a growing minority is seeking experimental styles. Tripathi further added that though people want experimental silhouette, yet end up purchasing classic styles, as they do not want to look 'too different' from the crowd. Farouqi said a minority is looking for experimental wear in his client base.

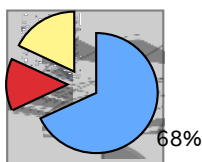


Fig 5: Preferences in terms of silhouette

The designers confirmed the findings of the survey that the consumers in smaller towns are becoming conscious of both brands and designer wear, and are also willing to spend money on apparel especially designer wear for its aspirational value. The present day consumer in these towns is buying classic styles but is definitely looking for experimental styles. According to Bennet & Rundel-Thiele, (2005), the brand's manager needs to understand brand loyalty and offer products that help build and sustain loyalty for the brand so that customers continue with the brand for longer periods, thus improving brand loyalty and hence profitability.

Conclusion

The research shows that Indian menswear market is growing steadily and statistics show that it is expected to grow at CAGR of 11% till 2020. The rural consumption is expected to grow much more than urban consumption and these markets follow different trend. Consumers of these markets do not respond in the same manner as metropolitan consumers, and in order to have an edge in the market, the product should be marketed with a local celebrity as the brand icon/ face of the brand as it influences the decision. The consumer connects better with a local face, a celebrity, and aspires to look/dress alike, wants to look different but does not want to stand out. These new markets offer a challenge but, for fashion, every season in every market is uncertain, fashion thrives on this uncertainty.

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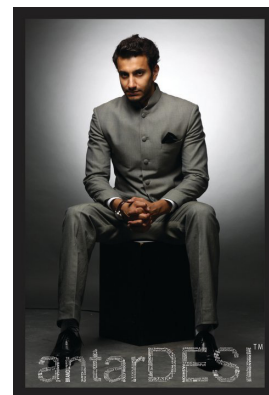


Fig 4: Occasion wear as a major purchase category 'An antarDesi outfit by Manish Tripathi'



Fig 6: The classic silhouette preferred by customers 'An antarDesi outfit by Manish Tripathi'

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- Pictures courtesy Manish Tripathi of AntarDesi.

Preserving History | Cultural Icons

• Cultural impact past, present and future

IV.

Auspicious symbols representing cultural icons

Ashima Tiwari & Amrita Roy National Institute of Fashion Technology, India

Asiatic Trends in 1930s Fashions, and the Icons who Promoted Them

Daniel James Cole Fashion Institute of Technology, United States

The Classic White Formal Shirt – a powerful emblem of social change

Dean Brough Queensland University of Technology, Australia

From the glorious past to the inspired present: tracing Indian heritage fashion from the maharani's to the current luxurious Indian ethnic wear.

Garima Kapoor Pearl Academy of Fashion, India

The Life of a Shoe: Past, Present, Future

Kate Medved Whitehouse Institute of Design, Australia

Evolution of Indian Silk Saree Brands and its influence on people and culture

Kumaraguru Kasinathan Pearl Academy of Fashion, India

The Iconic Dutch Woman

Maaïke Feitsma ArtEZ Institute of the Arts, Netherlands

Pop Art- Indian Lifestyle Industry's take on the Iconic trend

Mankiran Kaur Dhillon Pearl Academy of Fashion, India

The City as Cultural Fashion Icon: London and Shanghai

Dr. Natascha Radclyffe-Thomas & Babette Radclyffe-Thomas London College of Fashion, United Kingdom

Sari – The Iconic Attire of India

Ruby Kashyap Sood National Institute of Fashion Technology, India

The Use of Chinese Cultural Icons in Fashion

Tongyu Gu Donghua University, China

Auspicious symbols representing cultural icons

Ashima Tiwari & Amrita Roy National Institute of Fashion Technology, India



Ashima Tiwari

Ashima Tiwari is presently working as Asst. Professor at NIFT, New Delhi since October 2006. She did her Masters in Design (M.Des. specialization in Textile Design & Development) from NIFT, New Delhi in 2003. Her area of specialization includes Fundamentals of Design (Elements & Principles of Design, Design Ideation & Conceptualization and Design Process), Colour Fundamentals & Application, Craft Research & Documentation and Textile Weaving.

Presently she is exploring the areas of Graphic Design and Photography based on her keen interest in communication design. She is participated in one of the group photography exhibition "Maaya" held in Delhi. As a teaching professional she has explored form manipulation and abstraction for demonstration of visual language.

Abstract

Cultures are reflective of shared meaning and accepted values of a specific set of individuals. They are dynamic and responsive to changes in ways of thinking and meaning. Cultural beliefs and social practices create and reinforce frames of meaning which in turn influence ways of relating to a particular imagery or symbol.

All the human cultures use symbols to express the underlying structure of the social systems to designate ideal cultural characteristics and hence they become icons to represent the belonging culture. Representation of a cultural identity is perceived through symbols in the form of arts, language, myths, names, literature, rituals and ceremonies.

A symbol is defined as a letter, figure or a mark that communicates a concept, a thought or a belief of specific nature. In different cultures many symbols are considered auspicious embodying the notion of inner purity.

The most commonly used symbols in Hindu religion are *swastika*, lotus (*padma*), *om*, shell (*shankh*), trident (*trishul*), coconut circled by mango leaves on a pot (*kalasha*), cow (*gau*), footprints (*charan*), lamp (*diya*) and fish (*matsya*) which represent the cultural identity in common.

These iconic symbols are used as marking for various occasions to evoke good fortune and prosperity. In Hindu culture these iconic symbols are used on doors, walls, floor of residential and worshipping province as well as on articles like account books, wedding invites, prayers books offerings and new accusations. These symbols are also used while performing cultural rituals and in the ceremonies that mark important events in the life on an individual.

The paper aims at exploring the presence of religious symbols as cultural icons in context with Hindu culture in India. It also entails their perceived value and usage in current scenario.

Introduction

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Our minds are permeated by classical Hindu mythology; our imagination is imbued reflex of vivid personalities and perception about Hindu Gods. Different human minds conceive different patterns of shifting and changing colours of perceived notions. Art which makes the image, literature which elucidates attributes and functions, arrest and fix this shifting kaleidoscope.

Symbols are created to communicate concepts. Based on inherited and imbibed cultural belief, people from different cultures possess different opinions to explain the happening in their lives. Some universal aspects including the sun, the moon, food, water, air, earth, protection and hunger can have same or similar symbolism in different cultures. Contrary to this the subject of assembly with God has different paradigms in different cultures.

In Hindu community art and religion go hand in hand. It is usually essential to draw or plot something artistic on floors or on walls for different occasions. In certain communities where idol worship was forbidden resulted in usage of auspicious symbols for depiction of Gods and Goddesses.

The most commonly used symbols in Hindu religion are *swastika*, lotus (*padma*), *om*, shell (*shankh*), coconut circled by mango leaves on a pot (*kalasha* or *kumbh*), footprints (*charan*), lamp (*dipa*) and fish (*matsya*) which represent the cultural identity in common.

A research structure was formulated to enable an equal analysis of eight symbols covering symbolic meaning, significance and cultural adaptation. The following section entails exploration of above mentioned eight auspicious symbols corresponding to their symbolism, presence and usage as cultural icons. This section also provides an insight of their impact on society which in turn is visible in all art forms, rituals, festivals and ceremonies.

Swastika

Symbolic Meaning and Significance

Swastika is one of the few symbols with universal meaning, significance and distribution. The name originated from a Sanskrit word “*svast*” which means auspicious. The *swastika* is said to embrace and hold the energy of four cardinal points which are emphasized in the earliest Vedic fire ceremonies. All the four branches being open ended were considered expandable into cosmos.

It is made of two words, “*su*” means well and “*ast*” means being. A sense of infinite well being material, physical & spiritual meaning “all being well” as an overall concept, when something is regarded as auspicious, fortunate.

The four arms of *swastika* represent the four cardinal directions, four seasons and four elements i.e. earth, water, fire and air. In Hindu temples, homes and other places, the *swastika* motif is often decorated with four dots (*bindu*), in the centre of space between each arm. It is always painted red as red colour is considered auspicious in Hindu culture.

As per Hindu belief clockwise orientation of *swastika* depicts good fortune while anti-clockwise orientation depicts evil. On the other hand Judaeo-Christian the *swastika* with anti-clockwise orientation is not considered to be associated with evil rather it is a denotation of *tantric* attributes.

This symbol can be seen in ancient *Jain* faith symbol, which symbolises the four spheres into which a soul may be reborn. The four arms of *swastika* depicts four possibilities of after-life envisaged for humans including plant, animal, divine and demonic life. In Chinese Imagery *swastika* is known as *manji* which is an ancient solar symbol. According to same *manji* can face either way, in clockwise form it represents love and mercy and in anti-clockwise form it represents intelligence and strength.

Cultural Adaptation

- *Torans* hanged on doorways of Indian homes contains *Kalasha* and *Swastika* symbols for well being.
- *Swastika* motif can be seen in stylized version in floor decoration folk art of Rajasthan called *mandana*.
- *Muggu* is traditional floor design of Andhra Pradesh in which *swastika* motif is marked on a specific day.
- Presence of *swastika* motifs can be noticed in *warli* paintings of Maharashtra. *Warli* paintings are done on the walls using rice paste as medium. These paintings do not depict any particular mythological character or deities rather they reflect different aspects of social life. These may be theme oriented like festival,



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In her current position she teaches courses in Draping, Pattern-Making, Garment-Construction Techniques, Hand-Knitting Techniques and Lingerie Design Development. Prior to joining NIFT, she has worked as a merchandiser for three years in garment export house and buying house in Delhi and NCR Regions.

She received her B.Sc. in Home Science (Honors) from Lady Irwin College, Delhi University, and holds a Master in Design with specialization Knitwear Design from National Institute of Fashion Technology, New Delhi. Her research interests are in the field of seamless knitting technology involved in lingerie design development and surface finishes applied to the textiles.



Symbol : Swastika

harvest, folk story, celebration and temple marriage. Their attributes are simplicity and unique flavour of common's man life.

- The symbol of *swastika* is used in Hindu wedding cards to mark an auspicious beginning of a relationship.
- During festivals the sweets and gift articles are adorned with this symbol to impart religious flavour.

Padma or Lotus

Symbolic Meaning and Significance

Lotus is referred to as padma in Sanskrit .it is considered as a symbol of beauty & purity despite its origins in the murky water that nurture it. The lotus has become an archetypal emblem; a metaphor in art for all that is pure and benign. It is a yogic symbol for the thousand petalled expansion of psychic energy exploding into super consciousness and the flowering of self.

It is believed that the lotus is a reminder of all four elements, as lotus grows from earth nourished by water, liberates its fragrance in air and it is awoken by the Sun which symbolises fire. The lotus is one of the four attributes which can be seen in Lord *Vishnu's* imagery. The other three attributes are conch shell (*shankh*), discus (*Chakra*) and mace (*Gada*). The fully opened pink lotus motif is often depicted with gentle feminine nurturer Goddess Lakshmi which is a symbol of wealth and good fortune.

The lotus is a metaphor of conquest of spirit over matter depicting voyage of enlightenment.

By nature it reveals a phenomenon of growing brighter and perfect, inspite of being originated from dark and murky water.

The tendrils of lotus are never linear, always rolling in waves of open ended spirals; they merge into philosophic concepts of creation, a linear rhythm to convey the continuity of movement and growth in all nature. Lotus symbol is adopted by Hindu, Jain, Muslim and Buddhist cultures in different forms. As per Buddhist iconography lotus stalk, standing tall in axial erectness is a symbol of perfection above the muddied water from where it originates. The Vedic texts also talk of the ever bending, flowing, moving entity of lotus stems as generations of human flourishing in unbroken continuity. *Neelkamal* is an imagery of blue coloured lotus which is actually a water lily flower symbolises beauty and perfection.

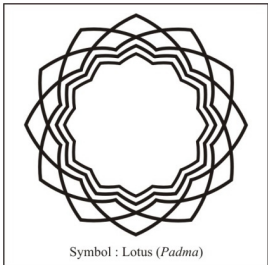
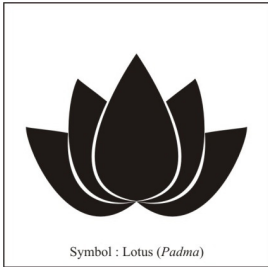
Cultural Adaptation

- A *Baha'i* temple in Delhi is an example of nine petalled lotus form used in architectural design.
- The lotus *mudra* in the forum of hand gestures is predominantly seen in *traditional bharat-natyam* dance form.
- Based on beliefs, conceived notions, synonyms of word lotus have been used to name men and women in Hindu culture including *kamal, pankaj, pushkar, rajiv, padma, kamla, nalini, padmini* and *mrilanili*.
- *Padam-pichhwai* from Nathdwara in Rajasthan is a cloth painting hung behind the image of Hindu God *Shrinathji* which contains lotus motif in various forms. *Pichhwais* are considered auspicious offerings to the God at the temples.
- In Hindu homes the lotus motif is drawn as a base on which a sculpture or imagery of Goddess *Lakshmi* is placed for worshipping.

Kumbh or Kalash

Symbolic Meaning and Significance

Kumbh is symbolic of a pitcher or pot which contains holi water. The *kumbh* is often decorated with a coconut kept in a floret of mango leaves in the neck of the pot which depicts cornucopia of a good life. The decor



imparts spiritual meaning to a common pot. *Kumbh* has deeper significance in representing life in its most bountiful & fulsome aspects. Bloated shape of vessel depicts wholeness and prosperity.

The motif resembles to one of the eight auspicious symbols of Buddhist iconography known as “treasure vase”. The water in the treasure vase is comparable to the amniotic fluid present in the womb which nourishes life in it hence it is considered as a source of life and spiritual wealth. The water content within the *kalasha* is considered as a symbol of *amrita* (the elixir of immortality) and resurrection.

It can be seen in Indian art themes including paintings around doorways at wedding and other festivals. Being non figurative, it is used in Islamic art in which sculpture or painting of living beings is forbidden.

Coconut is considered as an auspicious fruit for worship usage. It is symbolic of an auspicious beginning in the company of rotund God *Ganesha*.

Cultural Adaptation

- Usually people pray to the Lord of beginning (*Ganesha*) and break a coconut as an offering while starting a new venture. Breaking a coconut at the worship place is considered as ego's shattering and revealing the sweet fruit inside.
- It is also used in thanksgiving for successful completion of long journeys.
- Indian *Kumbh-Mela* (Pitcher Festival) is the most sacred of all the pilgrimages which entails gathering of huge number of worshippers in one place. *Kumbh* is associated with an imagery of confluence of holy water coming from different sources contained in it. This occasion is an example of experiencing the symbolism of *kalash* in the form of an important historic event.
- *Kumbh* is used in almost all the ceremonies that mark important events in the life on an individual.

Conch Shell or *Shankh*

Symbolic Meaning and Significance

Conch shell is known as “*shankh*” in Sanskrit language. Blowing of conch shell is considered as an auspicious mark while worshipping. It is one of the main attributes of God *Vishnu* who holds it in one of his hand. This is an artistic motif which carries a profound sacred appeal.

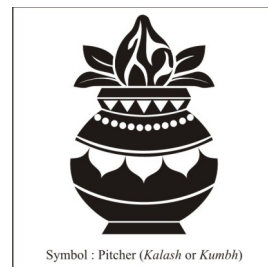
The conch shell is one of the four attributes which can be seen in Lord *Vishnu's* imagery. The other three attributes are lotus (*padma*), discus (*chakra*) and mace (*gada*). It is considered auspicious because of the presence of spirals representing open ended circles of life.

Conch shell shares the water's symbolic meaning as it is originated from element water. Based on this fact it is believed to be a metaphor of movement and immortality. Expansion and contraction, winding and unwinding, birth and deaths are some of the attributes relates to conch shell.

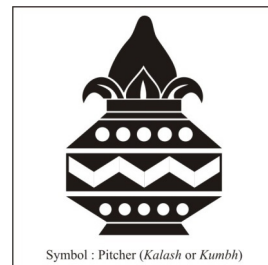
The sound of conch shell is believed to eliminate negative energy and purify the surrounding. It is believed when the sound of conch shell accosts the ears; a significant event is taking place in spiritual world.

Cultural Adaptation

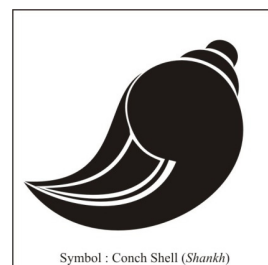
- The artistic motif of conch shell is used on border designs of traditional *ikat* (space-dyed) saris in Orissa.
- An interesting example of Architectural conch design is the magnificent temple complex at Puri, Orissa. During festivals villagers from Orissa depicts conch shell along with other regional motifs in the form of paintings on the wall using rice paste as a medium.
- The conch shell is represented in the sculptures of Sanchi in Madhya Pradesh and Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh.



Symbol : Pitcher (*Kalash* or *Kumbh*)



Symbol : Pitcher (*Kalash* or *Kumbh*)



Symbol : Conch Shell (*Shankh*)



Symbol : Conch Shell (*Shankh*)

- In part of eastern India the conch shell is blown in the morning to experience an auspicious beginning of the day.
- This motif is interestingly represented in floor decoration folk art of Bengal known as *alpana*.

Aum or Om

Symbolic Meaning and Significance

It is a sound syllable originated from Latin root “Omnes” which means all, omni-present, and omni-potent. It is used at the beginning and completion of worshipping and ceremonies because it is considered as a sound image symbol of God *Ganesh*.

It represents the supreme divine trinity: *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Maheshwar*; three worlds: earth, atmosphere and haven; time: Past, present and future; actions: creation, preservation and destructions; components: mind, body and soul. It is used in Hindu mantras, prayers as well as in meditation.

The sound image of *om* represents individual’s connection with the divine energy during meditation while graphical representation of the sound *om* entails larger impact.

It is believed that the symbol *om* represents the essence of the entire universe. The graphical form of *om* contains interlinked curves portraying relation between consciousness and dream world of awareness. The *om* consists of three curves, one semicircle and a dot. Three curves symbolise the awoken state (*jagruṭ*), deep sleep (*sushupṭ*) and the dream state (*swapna*). The dot supported by a semicircle signifies the blissful state of the spiritual being.

Om is articulated in different communities by different words. Amongst them “*ameen*” in Muslim community, “*ek omkar*” in Sikh community “*om namo arihantanam*” in Jain community and “*om mani padme hum*” in Buddhist community are important versions to be noticed.

Cultural Adaptation

- *Om* is also known as *pranava* or *akshara* which is chanted or marked in the commencement and completion of religious reading and writing.
- *Thangka* is a Buddhist scroll-painting which is displayed in monasteries and homes. They were also used by travelling monks who carried them from one monastery to another. Some popular motifs depicted in *thangka* paintings are *om*, *swastika*, lighted *dipa* (lamp), *kalash* (pitcher) and *padma* (lotus).
- *Om* symbol can be seen in religious calendars and notebooks.

Dipa or Lamp

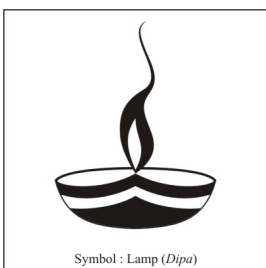
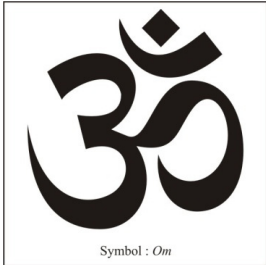
Symbolic Meaning and Significance

Dipa is a bowl shaped small vessel which contains cotton strands dipped in oil. It is usually lit up on auspicious occasions. *Dipa* is considered to be one of the four light Goddesses. The other three light Goddesses are *pushpa* (flower), *dhupa* (incense) and *gandha* (fragrance).

The symbol also depicts an individual who sheds his brilliance for others. It is believed that a *dipa* is lit inside Hindu homes during sunset before any other light enters the home.

Cultural Adaptation

- River Ganges is worshipped in the banks of Varanasi, Haridwar and Allahabad regions of northern India during various festivals with several *dipas* floated in the river.



- A festival in south India namely “Lakshadeepam”, entails worshipping with a lac of *dipas* lit around the temple. In the festival is celebrated once in six years and Lord Vishnu is worshipped in the form of a grand procession.
- *Deepawali* is very prominent festival of Hindu culture which is also known as festival of lamps (*dipas*). In this occasion people light several *dipas* to spread positive energy in their homes.

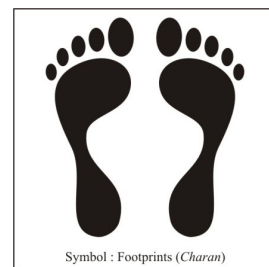
Foot Prints or Charan

Symbolic Meaning and Significance

The symbol of footprints has an important place in Hindu religious worship. Usually sacred footprints are worshipped and their presence can be marked in temples all over India. The footprints are metaphor of strength, stability, support and connection with earth. It gives a notion of God’s presence in eternity.

As per Hindu culture the symbol is a depiction of God *Vishnu*’s feet. However in accordance with Buddhism the symbol is a representation of *Buddha*’s feet. The footprints are one of the eight auspicious symbols of Buddhist iconography and they are used to indicate the places Lord *Buddha* visited during his life on earth.

During festivals this symbol is usually made on the doorway believing that the Goddess *Lakshmi* is entering the home in turn bringing wealth and happiness.



Cultural Adaptation

The motif of lotus bearing imprint of foot arranged in the form of a long chain can be recorded in folk art painting of Bihar known as *aripana*. *Aripana* patterns are a part of each and every auspicious ceremony in Bihar. During ceremonies *aripana* designs are prepared in the courtyard and on the door front. Any ritual is considered incomplete without this traditional art form adorning the ground.

In Bengal the symbol of footprints is used in floor decoration craft called *alpana*. They consider these marks as footprints of Goddess *Lakshmi* who brings prosperity and good fortune.

In India shoes are removed before entering holy places and even homes as it is believed that footwear can bring negative energy from outside world. Removing the shoes is also a sign of respect for the cleanliness both physical and religious.

As per Hindu rituals the new bride enters the groom’s house leaving her footprints pointing inward in red colour.

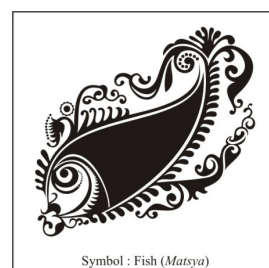
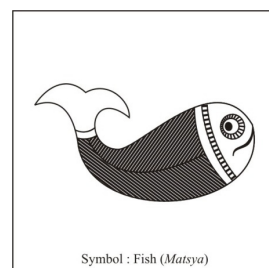
Matsya or Fish

Symbolic Meaning and Significance

Fish is a prominent symbol adapted in Hindu culture which is an iconographic representation of element - water. Jean Chevalier and Alan Gheerbrant defined the symbolism of water in three concepts including source of life, media for purification and center of regeneration. Having an association with water, the symbol is closely linked with the concept of origin and birth. Based on Hindu legend, fish is considered as an incarnation of God *Vishnu* who protected wisdom and arcane knowledge.

In north eastern regions of India, fish is viewed as a metaphor of fertility and prosperous life. But it is also observed that the meaning of fish overlaps with the meaning water as a common belief in different cultures.

A pair of golden fish is one of the eight auspicious symbols in Buddhism which symbolises longevity and liberation of beings from the ocean of cyclic existence. It is also believed that fish represent fertility and abundance based on their ability to lay many eggs at a time and their consequent swift reproduction.



Cultural Adaptation

- The depiction of fish icon can be observed in madhubani painting folk art of Bihar. The techniques used in Madhubani painting were guarded by the women in the family and were passed on from generation to generation. It is done on mud walls of huts and displayed during family functions, sacred rituals, ceremonies and marriages.
- Presence of fish motifs can be noticed in floor decoration art of Tamilnadu is known as *kolam*. The common attributes of *kolam* designs are precision, symmetry and complexity. It is believed that *kolams* symbolically obstruct evil spirits from entering homes.
- *Kantha* is a kind of embroidery popular in West Bengal. In the best examples, the entire cloth is covered with running stitches, employing beautiful motifs of fish, flowers and geometrical shapes.

Conclusion

While exploring the meaning of auspicious symbols it was found that the conceptualization of auspicious symbols is unanimously based on wisdom of pure observation and understanding of laws of nature.

The depiction of symbols encompasses many layers of meanings and interpretations. They reveal important aspects of religious beliefs and their successive inheritance from one generation to another.

These iconic symbols are used as marking for various occasions to evoke good fortune and prosperity. In Hindu culture these iconic symbols are used on doors, walls, floor of residential and worshipping province as well as on articles like account books, wedding invites, prayers books offerings and new accusations. These symbols are also used while performing cultural rituals and in the ceremonies that mark important events in the life on an individual.

Designs or articles containing auspicious symbols possess an emotional connect with the viewer of concerned culture. These symbols are explored in different mediums by various designers to enhance their physical attributes while retaining the emotional worth.

The age old auspicious symbols and their associated beliefs were observed and imbibed by individuals belonging to a particular culture. As a phenomenon, the perceived version is passed on to the next generation.

Perceived notions of the imbibed beliefs got translated in traditional art forms of India including visual narratives, paintings, floor and wall décor and textiles. The relevant examples in relation to each symbol were included under sub-head “cultural adaptation”. Furthermore inclusion of symbols in rituals, ceremonies and festivals in both figurative and conceptual fronts is also observed.

The gathered facts reveal a very strong influence of auspicious symbols in the society, as they have been adapted in one form or the other revealing a unanimous concept of social well being.

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Asiatic Trends in 1930s Fashions, and the Icons who Promoted Them

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Abstract

Although the 1930s is associated with sleek bias-cut neoclassic eveningwear, one of the most recurrent themes in fashion was multicultural influences. Several cultures had an impact; some of these had carried over from 1920s tastes, while others were newly asserted into the fashion landscape. Gypsy style was the buzz in Paris with brightly colored tiered skirts, and Mesoamerican influences were seen. But it was from Asia that the most significant and iconic looks came, with Chinese, Indian, and Indonesian-Malay styles. America-born actress Anna May Wong influenced Chinese styles. She was associated with the fitted *cheongsam* that had been popularized in Shanghai and Hong Kong during the 1920s. Travis Banton created glamorous versions for Wong's screen roles, and from there the *cheongsam* was encouraged as fashion staple for the rest of the century. Indian influences were encouraged by Indian society figures in Europe, and designers featured sari inspired gowns. But the Indian mode was strongly encouraged by French singer and actress, Lily Pons. Pons' appearances at the Metropolitan Opera in the title role of *Lakme* caused as sensation, her midriff baring *choli* style costumes were as celebrated as her singing; a film appearance as *Lakme* encouraged more attention and bare midriffs became commonly featured in evening gowns. Indonesian-Malay styles were most encouraged by a Caucasian American actress from Louisiana, Dorothy Lamour. During a wave of exotic jungle drama movies from Hollywood, Lamour played a Malaysian princess in the *The Jungle Princess* costumed by Edith Head; wearing a traditional *sarung* as her costume, it encouraged the popularity of sarong styles in fashion. This paper will explore these 3 actresses and the looks that they helped propel in fashion.

Asiatic Trends in 1930s Fashions, and the Icons who Promoted Them

The 1930s is often associated with sleek bias-cut neoclassic eveningwear, typically in white or ivory, with Greek details such as cowls and cascade drapes, exemplified by the glamorous charmeuse dresses Adrian designed for Jean Harlow, or those offered in the Paris houses of Madeline Vionnet and Augustabernard. The great fashion photographers of the day, such as George Hoyningen-Huene, emphasized these styles with dramatic chiaroscuro lighting and Greco-Roman props. These oft-reproduced images commonly represent the 1930s when illustrated in fashion history books. But with a look at the pages of *Harper's Bazaar*, *Vogue*, *L'Officiel*, and other periodicals, a wider picture of 1930s glamour emerges. Although the neoclassic styles were indeed prevalent, a closer examination of primary sources indicates many distinctive looks were occurring simultaneously.

Turn-of-the-Century influence was notable in the early years of the decade with *Vogue* even pinpointing in 1932 the "Modern Gibson Girl" and 1890s style leg o' mutton sleeves were popular in a number of variations. Daytime special occasion dresses were a noticeable vehicle for the trend, with such puffy sleeves, along with gored skirts, and detailed with ruffles and pin-tucks, harkening back to the "lingerie" dresses of the 1900s. The style was immortalized by Gilbert Adrian's widely copied design for Joan Crawford in *Letty Lynton* (1932). Other historic revivals were present during the coming years, with *Time* magazine noting in August 13, 1934 three dominant historically inspired looks in eveningwear: "Medieval, Crinoline, and Empire." The full-skirted romantic style became widespread by the end of the decade, notably in the hands of Norman Hartnell, but even Vionnet was praised for her dresses that, according to *Vogue*, resembled Mme de Pompadour [November 1934]. Millinery embraced the Middle Ages theme with snoods and coifs, while even bustle style drapery was asserted after mid-decade.

In addition to these historic styles, multicultural influences were widespread and varied. Several cultures had an impact; while some of these had carried over from tastes of the previous decades, others were being freshly asserted into the fashion repertoire. Russian styles – encouraged by Redfern and Poiret in the 1910s, and Chanel and Valentina in the 1920s – continued into the 1930s; imported Russian folk style blouses were commonly available in specialty shops and advertised in leading fashion magazines, and tall boyar style hats, often in fur, were one of the many options seen in millinery. Germany was busy promoting its Aryan heritage with the rise of the Third Reich, and partisan folk dress was permeating women’s fashion there, with the more overtly folkloric modes dubbed “Gretchen” styles. Cristobal Balenciaga looked to the historic and regional costume of his native Spain for inspiration. A supposed “Gypsy” style was the buzz of Paris in 1937. The colorful full skirts typical of the look prompted *Harper’s Bazaar* to quip in October of that year: “Someone met a gypsy [sic], someone thought of gypsy stripes and tossed that thought at Paris . . . Else how can you account for the wild gypsy mood that runs through all the spring collections?” The same month, a Mexican look was encouraged (that included rather similar full peasant skirts) and culminated in photographs of Frida Kahlo by Toni Frisell in *American Vogue*; Kahlo herself was amused by the number of women in New York City who attempted an “a la Mexicana” look.

All these considered, it was from Asia that the most notable regional influences came. For example, Japanese inspired faux kimono sleeves were a common feature on both late day and evening looks. But it was from China, India, and the Malay Archipelago that the most important Asiatic styles were derived. Furthermore, these three modes were encouraged by celebrity fashion icons – Anna May Wong, Lily Pons, and Dorothy Lamour respectively – whose costumes in several signature roles buoyed these regional styles.

Responding to the harsh economic times, the lure of exotic fantasy was an important part of the cultural landscape of the time. While Hollywood provided escapism in the form of silver screen glamour (typified by handsome men in tuxedos and lithe women in satin and lamé gowns), the fascination with far-off lands, promoted in travel advertising of the time, provided another form of escape. Sometimes the two combined as with a number of Hollywood productions featuring exotic locals or scenarios such as *The Most Dangerous Game* (1932), *Chandu the Magician* (1932), *King Kong* (1933), as well as several *Fu Man Chu* and *Tarzan* films. Fashion illustration of the time frequently used travel as a theme or backdrop, and fashion magazines were filled with travel advertisements, especially for ocean liner vacations to eastern hemisphere or southern hemisphere destinations. While the Great Depression economically affected much of the world, clearly there were enough people with disposable income to keep the travel industry afloat. And for those who could not afford such travel, the many advertisements and feature stories provided plenty of encouragement for daydreams of fantastic holidays. Also encouraging interest in world cultures was the *Exposition Coloniale Internationale* in Paris in 1931. French colonies – many of them in Africa, but also in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and the South Pacific – were showcased in the exposition. The styles of Wong, Pons, and Lamour were part of this overall phenomenon of exoticism, and the strong presence of each of these women in the media ensured that the styles they promoted would be encouraged to the general public.

Anna May Wong and the Taste for Chinese

The taste for Chinese style in the western world can be detected at least as far back as the 13th and 14th century travels of the Polo family of Venice, and the subsequent riveting (if factually questionable) accounts of their journeys that circulated. *Chinoiserie* was a strongly asserted taste in Europe during the 18th century, with décor, architecture, and housewares all affected by the style, featuring fantastic locales, dragons, phoenixes, and pagodas, among other motifs. Although the decorative arts were most affected, fashion was clearly influenced especially in fabric design (including prints and embroidery), and accessories such as imported (or imitation Chinese) fans. The styles continued throughout the 19th century when it survived as a more generalized Orientalism. Following the opening of Japanese borders in 1853 after three centuries of isolation, *Japonisme*, a similarly inauthentic style, became dominant for a few decades, supplanting, but often melding with, *Chinoiserie*.



Lily Pons as Lakmé,
Metropolitan Opera Archives

During the 1920s, Chinese inspirations in fashion were marked. Fashion illustration made strong allusions to an imagined China; the Callot Soeurs in Paris created Chinese inspired brocade dresses, often using actually imported fabrics; and Cartier featured a variety of Chinese inspired pieces of jewelry and decorative accessories. The influence extended well beyond fashion. In 1920, mahjong sets were sold in the United States for the first time. The board game halma was revised and renamed “Chinese checkers” in competition with mahjong, although Chinese checkers had no actual Asian source of origin. Perhaps the ultimate expression of 1920s Chinoiserie was Grauman’s Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, which opened in 1927, heavily adorned with Chinese motifs in its opulent decor.

During the Chinese Theatre’s construction in 1926, the first rivet of the steel framework was ceremoniously put in place by the actress Anna May Wong (1905–1961). A third-generation American, Wong was born in Los Angeles’ Chinatown, and had been notably featured in the Orientalist films *The Toll of the Sea* (1922), a reworking of the Madame Butterfly story, and *The Thief of Bagdad* (1924), a spectacle starring Douglas Fairbanks. Wong was known for her well-dressed, glamorous style, and her personal look reflected both the western world of her American nationality and her Chinese heritage. She had a very large wardrobe that included a sizable collection of Chinese pieces, and she often mixed east and west in one ensemble; one of her favorite garments was her father’s traditional wedding jacket that she had restyled for herself. Her look was well documented on both sides of the Atlantic as well as both sides of the Pacific. Her glossy banged hairstyle was often copied, and her hands were celebrated for their great beauty.

A 1929 photograph by George Hoyningen-Huene shows an exquisitely lovely Wong dressed in the dark satin *cheongsam*. The sleek form of the cheongsam developed from the loose fitting centuries-old Manchu robe commonly know as *chángpáo* or *qípáo*. Although the mandarin term *qípáo* would be retained in some areas and instances for the fitted style, the Cantonese term *cheongsam* prevailed. The fitted style probably initially developed among upper class women in Shanghai during the 1920s, and became an iconic symbol of the new Republican Period of China. The popularity of the cheongsam was reinforced by women in Hong Kong, as well as the “Straits Chinese” and *Peranakan* populations in Penang, Melaka, and Singapore. The fitted style was contrary to the dominant silhouette of western women’s clothing of much of the 1920s. When Wong was pictured in the style in 1929, it was prescient of the prevailing silhouette of the 1930s; the smooth silhouette of the cheongsam was in keeping with Western taste during the decade, and Wong’s association with the style helped popularize it. Wong appeared in several notable films during the 1930s that promoted her Asiatic style, including *Daughter of the Dragon* (1931), *Daughter of Shanghai* (1937), and *Dangerous to Know* (1938). Paramount costume designer Travis Banton provided Chinese style wardrobe for Wong in *Shanghai Express* (1932), and in *Limehouse Blues* (1934) he costumed her in an iconic cheongsam-inspired evening gown covered with a sequined dragon. Banton’s designs for Wong strongly reinforced her image in the 1930s, and together they further encouraged the popularity of the cheongsam.

The 1930s reflected the taste for Chinese styles in many ways. Evening coats sometimes included mandarin collars and boxy shapes, while pagoda sleeves returned to popularity. Valentina created millinery (both day and evening styles) in the form of the Asian conical hat. Princessa foundations advertised girdles that achieved “bamboo slimness”, while in 1934 *Vogue* contributed to the wave with the feature article “My Cook is a Chinaman”. When China’s last emperor, Pu Yi, was established as the Emperor of the Japanese puppet kingdom of Manchukuo in 1934, the event was widely covered in the Western media, and spawned souvenir merchandise.

During the 1930s China was reinforced in Western imagination with Wong’s assistance. Wong herself, though enjoying a successful career, was trapped in film roles that perpetuated cultural stereotypes of Asian women. The most desirable Asian female characters that broke through these stereotypes were cast with white actress in “yellow face” makeup, such as Louise Rainer in *The Good Earth* (1937) and Katharine Hepburn in *Dragon Seed* (1944). Despite a glass ceiling of a racist industry, Wong not only helped promote the cheongsam, but more importantly she was the first woman of Asian descent to truly achieve status as a fashion icon in the western world.

Lily Pons, Lakmé, and a new Indomania

Styles from India were very popular beginning in the 18th century, particularly in the British Empire because of its colonial presence in the subcontinent. The trend, known as “Indomania”, was apparent in a wide range of cultural disciplines. Perhaps the most notable and obvious visual example of this trend was the Brighton Pavilion, begun in 1787; a favorite residence for George, the Prince of Wales (later King George IV), its design was derived from the Indo-Islamic style, typified by the Taj Mahal. Indian themes were strong in fashion during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Near Eastern and South Asian derived turbans were worn by Marie Antoinette shortly before the French Revolution, and became a strong element in fashion from the 1780s well into the 1830s. The noteworthy fashion plates of Nikolaus Von Heidelhoff, which began in 1794 published in Britain, emphasized these turban styles (with a particularly Indian slant) and were extremely fine examples of Georgian and Regency tastes. In addition to the popularity of such turbans, Indian metallic brocade and embroidery, such as *zari* and *zardosi* techniques (both real and domestically created), were popular as women’s dress fabric especially for full dress. Josephine Bonaparte and her circle encourage imported South Asian style cashmere shawls, with the traditional *mankolam* design or similar motifs. Domestically produced imitations became huge business, with the Scottish town of Paisley leading production, as well as giving its name to the design. Such shawls became wardrobe essentials for well-dressed women not only on both sides of the channel, but both sides of the Atlantic, and the popularity of these “paisley shawls” extended throughout the 19th century.

During the 1930s, India was a popular travel destination, and Indian themes were present in advertising for a variety of products. Indian aristocrats were also present in high society: notable among these was the Princess Karam of Kapurthala, an important figure in London and Paris. She was frequently pictured in fashion magazines and dressed by leading couturiers. Indian inspiration, particularly the sari, was a common theme for designers, including Schiaparelli, Alix, and Valentina; Indian influence was also apparent in costume jewelry, and millinery often included Sikh inspired turbans.

These currents in fashion coincided with a high profile revival of Léo Delibe’s *Lakmé* (first produced in 1880) at New York’s Metropolitan Opera Association. The production starred the box office sensation, French soprano and actress Lily Pons (1904-1976). Born Alice Joséphine Pons in southern France, she made her Metropolitan Opera debut in 1931 to immediate success and great acclaim. She was featured in a repertoire that showcased her spectacularly agile singing and her attractive physical appearance. The revenue that Pons’ generated for the company is purported to have helped the Metropolitan Opera survive the Great Depression. Pons figured prominently in popular culture of the decade with radio appearances, and a high profile recording contract from RCA Victor. In the world of high style, her presence was frequent and notable in fashion magazines of the time, both modeling and as a celebrity endorser for products.

The opera *Lakmé* tells the story of the forbidden love between the daughter of a Brahmin priest and a colonial British officer, typical of late nineteenth century Orientalist fantasies, but still salient to the current taste for exoticism in the 1930s. Dressed in exotic costumes based on traditional Indian clothing, Pons performed onstage in very revealing outfits derived from the bare midriff style of the Indian *choli*; her costumes were as celebrated as her performance, leading the *New York Times* critic to note that Pons “went to the Hindus themselves and succeeded in finding the materials for her wraps” [14 February 1932]. Her midriff was such a sensation that it was displayed in other roles, notably as the Queen of Shemakan in Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov’s *The Golden Cockerel*, another Orientalist vehicle, in costumes created Valentina. Pons traveled to Hollywood, making three films for RKO Pictures. In *I Dream Too Much*, which cast her opposite Henry Fonda in 1935, Pons portrayed an opera singer (much like herself) known for her portrayal of Lakmé, and the onstage sequences of the opera in the film displayed the appeal of Pons’ midriff and faux Indian look to a wider audience, and preserved her style in celluloid for posterity.

Midriffs had already been asserted in leisurewear and swimwear, particularly by French designers providing clothes for the Riviera. Encouraged by the new Indomania, and perhaps Pons’ costuming, midriffs became featured more frequently in evening dress, with notable examples coming from Vionnet, and growing in popularity later in the decade and into the 1940s. Hollywood encouraged the style by providing many memorable midriffs on screen. These included Joan Crawford in *The Women* in 1939 wearing a spectacular

orientalist lamé gown by Adrian, with peek-a-boo tummy exposures. Other memorable midriff moments were provided by Barbara Stanwyck in *The Lady Eve* (1941), and Ingrid Bergman in *Notorious* (1946) (both costumed by Edith Head), and Joan Crawford once again in *Mildred Pierce* (1945). During World War II, rationing served as an excuse to promote bare midriff styles further, as the mere inches of fabric conserved by such outfits could be hailed in the name of the war effort, a style reflected in one of Lana Turner's costumes in the *Post Man Always Rings Twice* (1946), coincidentally topped off with a turban.

Dorothy Lamour, The Jungle Princess

Given their geographic location, the resource rich lands of the Malay Archipelago and the Malay Peninsula were naturally placed at the crossroads of early trade routes, and influences from China, India, Africa and Arabia were present for hundreds of years. News of early Portuguese exploration and colonization captured the European imagination with exotic kingdoms, peoples and customs. Dutch colonies came not long after, along with the pursuit of British interests. European presence was felt throughout Maritime Southeast Asia and the South Pacific, where Spanish, French, British, Dutch, and other nations made colonies and conquests. The voyages of Captain James Cook and other explorers brought much visual information back to Europe. Some of this found its way into fashion inspiration, for example in the form of Oceanic flowers and fruits in embroidery design, often featured on the heavily embroidered men's full dress suits of the late 18th century. European trade and colonization in the region continued and grew, while the cataclysmic 1883 eruption of the Krakatau volcano captivated the globe.

Exhibitions of Paul Gauguin's work from French Polynesia during the early 20th century promoted interest in the Oceanic world, and in the wrap around print garments of the indigenous women he depicted. The *Exposition Coloniale* in Paris in 1931 included displays of Pacific and Southeast Asian cultures, and these may have had an impact on leisurewear with designers providing wrap styles for the beach. Gilbert Adrian's designs for Greta Garbo in *Mata Hari* (1931) gave a rather ludicrous art deco twist to the already artificial Javanese styling of the original "Mata Hari", Margaretha McLeod. The ongoing Dutch presence in the islands that would later become Indonesia continued to encourage western interest in the culture of the archipelago; this perhaps reached a zenith in 1937 when Gusti Nurul, Princess of Mankunegaran of the Sultanate of Surakarta, performed a Javanese *bekson* dance in traditional dress for the wedding of Princess Juliana of the Netherlands to Prince Bernhard of Lippe-Biesterfeld at the Noordeinde Palace in the Hague. A few years earlier, *Vogue* noted fashion trends in January 1933 (with erroneous ethnic geography): "Java is influencing our shores – some of the new beach clothes are of materials similar to the glamorous stuff Bali natives wear" noting tied-on wrap skirts and simple rectangular tops with rope drawstrings. Such styles were encouraged even further, and to a much wider degree, by the popularity of American actress Dorothy Lamour (1914-1996).

Born Mary Leta Dorothy Slaton in Louisiana, she won the crown of Miss New Orleans in 1931, which eventually led to work as a stage actress and big band singer. After moving to Hollywood, she was quickly contracted by Paramount. Her second film, *The Jungle Princess*, (1936) caused a sensation and established Lamour as a fashion icon. The film was typical of the exotic adventure genre popular during the 1930s. The Caucasian Lamour played "Ulah," a Malay princess living in the jungle with a pet tiger. The actress was costumed in strapless wrapped dresses that designer Edith Head based on the indigenous garment of maritime Southeast Asia, the *sarung*, commonly known in the west with the transliteration "sarong". A length of fabric, sometimes sewn into a tube and often made from the signature Javanese fabric *batik*, the traditional *sarung* usually wrapped around the body as a skirt or tubular strapless dress; the word *sarung* literally means "sheath" in the Malay and Indonesian languages. The following year in Paramount's *The Hurricane* (1937), Lamour portrayed another sarong-clad princess, "Marama" of the South Seas, once again costumed by Head. The sarong styles in these two films caused a sensation, and not only boosted Lamour's career but were an important step for Head's career as well.

Head's costumes for Lamour further encouraged the popularity of sarong styles in fashion. Sarong skirts, typically in large-scale tropical floral prints, became resort-wear and leisurewear staples for western

women, often worn over swimsuits poolside; the style was seen at all market levels including high fashion versions in *Vogue*, *L'Officiel*, and other periodicals, as well as in the Sears catalogue, and home sewer versions. Some evening dresses of the period also reflected the sarong style including designs from Vionnet and Schiaparelli. In an example of reciprocal influence, a 1937 film *Terang Boelan*, in part based on *The Jungle Princess*, was produced in the Dutch East Indies in the Indonesian language and premiered in Batavia (present day Jakarta). As for Lamour, she became typecast in such parts and earned the nickname "Sarong Queen"; this was further emphasized by her exotic, if inauthentic, Asian garb in the comedic series of *Road to...* films, beginning in 1940 with the *Road to Singapore* and *Road to Bali*.

An Enduring Multiculturalism

Asiatic styles were a mainstay of western fashion in the 20th century. Building on the western world's long history of orientalism, Poiret, Lanvin, Callot, along with many others designers, began the 20th century mining inspiration in both cut and detail from Eastern cultures. Building during the 1910s and 1920s, the 1930s were a time of particular development in Asian styles in western fashion. While conflict with Japan during the war precipitated a decline in Asian influence for a few years, the post war years saw a clear return.

A gown designed by Jean-Louis for Rita Hayworth in *Gilda* (1946) combined a choli style top with a sarong style skirt. Valentina continued her cultural borrowings, while post war newcomer Tina Leser took as her inspiration much of Asia, including China and India, as well as Malaysia and Indonesia. Yves Saint Laurent championed Mongol and Chinese styles in the late 1970s, while Marc Jacobs' similar inspirations in 2010 for Louis Vuitton garnered great attention. Valerie Steele and John Major chronicled the phenomenon in the 1999 book *China Chic*, and in 2005 Chinese born New York designer Vivienne Tam published a book with the same title. Taiwanese Designer Wang Chen Tsai-Hsia of the label Shiatzy Chen began showing in Paris in 2008. Fashion weeks are held in both Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta, where designers include the melding of traditional garments and fabrics with western styles. Mumbai's highly popular fashion week, coincidentally named "Lakmé Fashion Week", showcases the work of India's best designers; similarly, fashion weeks in Shanghai and Hong Kong feature the work of designers there.

As cheongsams, bare midriffs, and sarongs are all fashion staples today, the impact of these three ladies, Anna May Wong, Lily Pons, and Dorothy Lamour, can still be felt. In addition to these styles in particular, all three women helped encourage eastern tastes in general, and contributed to the steady globalization of fashion that is part of our world today.

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The Classic White Formal Shirt – a powerful emblem of social change

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Abstract

The classic white formal shirt is a widely and readily familiar object with considerable historical cultural significance to diverse social groups, and is therefore deserving of iconic status. For more than two hundred years, this singular item of apparel has been able to define and represent status, wealth, gender shifts and fashion norms. This garment, which has historically been relinquished to undergarment status, deserves an escalation of standing.

The classic white formal shirt, for both men and women, can be used as a mirror to map considerable social change and the diversity of influence can be traced through many examples, including: Beau Brummell's dandy status with his legendary white shirting; the Gibson Girl with her decorated white shirt style blouse defining ideals of female beauty; IBM business employees in the 1920s marketing trustworthiness through the uniformity of white shirts; the fictional advertising creation of the Arrow Collar Man, with his rigid white shirt, promoting American masculine ideals; and the iconic 1980s Hugo Boss style crisp white dress shirt symbolising power.

The origins of the influence of the white shirt can be best traced in the Victorian era where it was an important symbol of wealth and class distinction and a powerful emblem of sobriety and uniformity for men. The pure white colour fulfilled masculine ideals of resolute austerity and the shirt, through its constancy, epitomised conformity and dependability. For women, the white cloth of the 'shirt-waist' from this period was also linked to ideals of cleanliness and purity and was seen as an iconic symbol of the new independent working class woman.

This paper will propose that the classic white formal shirt, for both men and women, has been a powerful marker of social shifts in Western society and this underrated item of apparel, with limited scholarly writing, is worthy of iconic status. The discussion will trace the historical development of both the men's and women's white shirt, each with their own unique history, and in doing so highlight the considerable historical cultural significance associated with the white formal shirt. Discussed first will be the men's white formal shirt.

Men's White Formal Shirt

Describing the form - the archetypal men's white formal shirt

The archetypal men's white formal shirt (sometimes referred to as a dress shirt) has a natural fit for the upper-body and a centre front button opening with tab, rigid collar and cuffs, yoke customarily cut double, long set-in-sleeves and a curved hem line. In current times, the garment is generally made from cotton or cotton blend woven fabric. The reference to formal in the descriptor differentiates the garment from more casual style white shirts, such as polo shirts, T-shirts, and pullover style shirts such as the Rugby or Henley shirt. This classic item of men's apparel is readily recognised within Western society and worn by diverse cultural groups.

The developmental phase of the archetypal form of the men's white formal shirt

The shirt (period term, 'sherte') is an enduring item in both name and in its principal design. Its provenance can be traced back to the Norman period, around the turn of the first millennium, with a loose, utilitarian garment referred to as a chemise or smock. This unstructured form, which was essentially considered an undergarment, was brought to the fore by the legendary figure George Bryan "Beau" Brummell (1778-1840) with his meticulous white linen shirts and elaborately knotted cravats.

Keywords: Fashion cultural icons, fashion history, white shirt, white dress shirt, white blouse, fashion and gender, fashion norms, fashion and social change

In the middle part of the nineteenth century the origins of the archetypical form of the modern shirt as we know it today, begin to emerge. During the period 1840s to 1870s, the shirt shifted from a loose garment to a fitted garment which essentially resembled current notions of fit and style. The catalyst for change was threefold: tailors adopted a scientific approach to drafting shirt patterns and this mathematical system enabled a better fitting garment; the cut of the garment was transformed to address the bulky and uncomfortable undershirt, as a result of a growing trend for more fitted vests and jackets; and improvements in sewing manufacture allowed for ready-made shirts to become affordable, enabling a more refined style and cut to permeate the market.

By the close of the 1890s, the bedrock had been laid for what we know today as the archetypical white formal shirt. The basic form is consistent with current notions of fit, silhouette and construction, apart from detached collars being used in this period due to prohibitive laundry costs.

Social influence of the men's white formal shirt – Victorian times

In the last decade of the nineteenth century the white formal shirt formed one of the keystone elements for understanding classical male dress right up until the first decade of the twentieth century. This was despite it being for the most part, hidden by outer garments. The white formal shirt, until the end of the nineteenth century, was a significant symbol of wealth and class distinction, as only a person of substantial prosperity could afford to have their shirts washed frequently and to own enough of them to wear. The link between social distinction and the whiteness of the shirting cloth was, as Roetzel (1999, p.20) proposes, used as a marker for affluence, as an unclean white shirt was connected with 'dirty', poorly paid labouring work. Even an unclean collar implied that not only was the garment unclean, but the inner body – including the mind – was as well.

The white formal shirt was also a powerful emblem of sobriety and uniformity in the Victorian era. Flugel (1930, p.75) considered that the white shirt, with its 'virgin' and pristine appearance, sent a message of being authoritative, steadfast and trustworthy. The relationship between responsibility, sobriety and uniformity allowed the white shirt to become a customary vehicle for masculine dress. The pure white colour fulfilled masculine ideals of unwavering sombreness and the shirt, through its constancy and rigid appearance with high collars, stiff bibs and cuffs, epitomised conformity and dependability. As Hollander (1994, p.69) suggests, by the nineteenth century, men who concerned themselves with decorative versus utilitarian needs were reviled for being non-masculine. The unadorned white formal shirt was intrinsically correlated to appropriate moral masculine behaviour and it was believed that any deviation from that norm would result in a collapse of society's established conservative values. Honeyman (2002, p.428) states that this austerity of dress "indicated that a man could be trusted, that he was serious and that he meant business. It also meant that he was unlike a woman". Hence, in the Victorian era, the white shirt underpinned attitudes to manliness and formed a foundation stone for visual and moral assumptions about masculine ideals.

Furthermore, when patterned shirts were worn in that period, suspicions were raised as the patterned fabric was perceived to mask a lack of personal cleanliness. The potent historical message a white shirt can convey is noted by Mark Twain (1981, p.415) in his autobiographical account of his life (first published 1872), "if a man wanted a fight on his hands without any annoying delay, all he had to do was to appear in public (rural working class) in a white shirt and he would be accommodated. For those people hated aristocrats". In essence, the white shirt was used as an emblem of business success and power and as a distinguishing marker for social rank.

This association with status is evident in the 1880s and onwards with the adoption of the terms 'white collar' and 'blue collar' workers – white collar denoting a clerical or managerial level, and blue collar denoting manual work. Traditionally, shirts for manual workers were dyed a shade of indigo to conceal labouring stains and, as Turbin (2002, p.483) proposes, many working class men resented clerical workers for wearing white shirts, referring to them as 'white collar stiffs' as they dressed above their station, as an employer not an employee. Hence, the white shirt was essentially viewed as a symbolic icon inferring social status.

The collar was also used as a symbol of social rank, with high standing collars preventing a downward gaze, as Turbin (2002, p.482) states, “to look downward, high-status men had to literally look down their noses”. Consequently, high rigid collars distinguished the elite from clerks who necessitated low collars for ease of movement. The detachable collar could also be readily starched, thereby allowing a rigidity and armour like appearance for the wearer. This rigidity was considered a crucial aspect for correct and sober dress during this period.

By the close of the nineteenth century the use of the white formal shirt as an insignia to define status had diminished, becoming instead, ubiquitous male apparel. The reasons are threefold. Firstly, with the rise of the industrial revolution, manufacturing costs for shirts decreased and availability increased. As a result, men were able to afford to own at least one white shirt and these were readily available. Secondly, the rise of the middle class enabled an increased affluence brought about by a new ethos which combined consumption, cleanliness and European gentility. This penchant for cleanliness acted as fuel for a public desire for immaculate white shirts, thereby escalating their popularity. Craik (1994, p.184) suggests that the rise of consumption patterns allowed a new, restrained style of dress to thrive and the correct external appearance of a man became fused to his social mobility and possible business success. Finally, the average man could now afford to launder at least one white shirt with multiple detachable collars, cuffs and bibs. This shirt was then able to equip a man for church, the ‘high street’ and for employment within clerical roles. The white shirt was now able to bridge societal divides and the defining factor for class separation was no longer the colour but the fit, quality of the cloth and very discreet style variations.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, with the rise of commercial laundries and inside plumbing, the whiteness of a shirt could easily be maintained. In urban contexts (Western society), it was now common place to own a number of white shirts and the increased quality of manufacture ensured robustness during the laundering process and improved garment longevity. In this period the wearing of coloured shirts for business wear was gaining popularity, however, white shirts were still regarded as appropriate for evening-wear and ‘Sunday best’ attire. Detailing continued to be minimal (although bib fronts were sometimes pleated) or non-existent during this period. As Burtis (quoted in Shep and Cariou, 1999, p.220) states in a 1911 ladies’ journal, *Making a Shirt for a Man*, “many men believe that it is unbecoming for any one, save perhaps a college boy, to affect anything bordering on decoration or fad stunts as they call them”.

Twentieth century and the white formal shirt

In the early twentieth century, the white formal shirt continued to have an undergarment association and, if a man was wearing only trousers and a shirt, he was considered to be ‘undressed’ (Urban Western contexts). Cunnington and Willett (1992, p.15) propose that a shirt was considered an undergarment up until the First World War and that the notion of an outer garment touching the skin was simply abhorrent. Even in contemporary times, this customary hangover can be evidenced where it can still be considered poor taste, in certain social and business contexts, for a man to take off his jacket in public and expose his shirt.

After the end of the First World War, a societal shift was occurring with a consequent rejection of Victorian rigid and ‘starched’ ideals and a desire to adopt new, post war conventions. The white formal shirt was still commonly worn; however, rigid collars, cuffs and bibs became fundamentally aligned to formal wear. A new, softer and more fluid look was developing for less formal clothing. One of the key influences was the Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII for only one year in 1936), who was a popular leader of fashion at the time. His rejection of the white shirt, with its severe lines, in favour of soft, floppy, coloured shirts created a major shift in menswear. Alongside this shift to a ‘softer’ style of dress, casual shirts were becoming popular, including tennis and sports shirts. This period was also aligned to the demise of the detachable collar on the formal shirt, due to reduced laundering and manufacturing costs.

Nevertheless, in the first part of the 1920s the white formal shirt was still associated with moral respectability. As an example, in 1924 the founding father of IBM, Thomas J. Watson, was insistent on a dress code demanding his office employees to wear a classic white shirt as part of their mandatory attire. As Olofsson (2004, p.42) claims, a white shirt possesses sterling qualities of reliability, respectability and responsibility. This association with ideals of steadfastness was also played out in the fictional American advertising

creation of the Arrow Collar Man (1905-31), with his rigid white shirt, promoting American masculine ideals. As Stump (2012, p.126) suggests the Arrow Collar Man was an easily identifiable character from early twentieth-century advertisements and was a major influence of visual masculine norms during the First World War.

The next major change for the white formal shirt was the introduction of synthetic fabrics in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Even though the adoption of synthetic fibres did not alter the garments appearance, it transformed the wearability and serviceability of the shirt. With the introduction of nylon blends, and subsequently polyester, shirts were 'drip dry' and required minimal ironing. However, synthetic fibres had questionable ability for comfort, particularly in hot, humid climates. Interestingly, the shirt was now no longer considered as an undergarment, as the white tee-shirt/singlet fulfilled this role.

Another significant shift for the white formal shirt was in the late 1960s and early 1970s. This period witnessed an escalation in detailing, in particular, frontal flounces and ruffles, as well as increased collar widths. Also, for some, the necktie was being rejected in favour of open neck shirts. The white formal shirt was still seen as a proper garment as a vast array of highly coloured and printed shirts popularised the market place for casual clothing. In the early 1980s, for a brief period, an innovative romantic style of dressing with loosely styled foppish and frilled white shirts was the height of fashion – influenced by popular new romantic bands, such as Spandau Ballet. Through the 1980s 'power dressing', with labels such as Hugo Boss, was fashionable (urban business contexts) and the white formal shirt, once again, regained its association with power and prestige. The formal shirt styles were austere and rigid and the tie regained a strong foothold. By the 1990s and onwards, with the casualisation of clothing, the archetypal white formal shirt, with rigid two-piece collar and cuffs, continued to be associated with formal occasions or official work contexts.

In conclusion, the modern white shirt for men has remained fairly consistent in form and detailing since the 1890s. Even though manufacturing methods have improved significantly since the end of the nineteenth century, the fundamental technique of assembly has not changed. The principal elements of the shirt have remained constant – areas for rigidity have not been altered and the style of detailing for a formal shirt has not radically shifted in form. Thus, it is concluded that from 1890 onwards the men's white formal shirt has had only minor 'flirtations' with innovation and its principal form has remained comparatively static from that period. As has been demonstrated, the archetypal men's white formal shirt has been an enduring form, with notable cultural significance, thereby worthy of iconic status.

Discussed next is the women's white formal shirt

Women's White Shirt

Describing the form - the women's white shirt

The women's white formal shirt, sometimes referred to a blouse, has many variations and is not as fixed in form as the archetypal men's formal shirt, including less strict contextual deeming of formality to delineate the style of garment. The general form is broadly based on the archetypal men's formal shirt, with front opening, set in sleeves, shoulder seam and some variant of a collar, in white cloth. Copious differences exist within the general form, including garment length, sleeve fullness, body ease and levels of decoration. A diversity of fabric types and densities are used, including cloth that is sheer.

The women's formal white shirt as we know it today has evolved from two distinct lineages, one being the fitted form (referred to as a shirt-waist) and the other being a loose form (referred to as a middie-blouse). Discussed first will be the shirt-waist.

The shirt-waist

By the 1890s a major shift was occurring in women's dress styles and a new fashion was developing that resulted in changes to the silhouette - the waist became a central visual component and an S-bend silhouette was favoured. In particular, the wearing of a shirt-waist (or *waist*, as it was sometimes abbreviated to) enabled a 'new look' to surface and was seen as a significant departure from previous rigid Victorian

silhouettes. An 1889 fashion publication by Butterick, *The Delineator*, proclaimed “Shirt-waists are such an important part of a woman’s (wardrobe) that they cannot afford to be neglected.” (Harris, 2002, p.4). The shirt-waist became the principal part of a woman’s upper body dress in the late nineteenth century.

As part of these developments, a two piece outfit, consisting of a tailored skirt and a fitted shirt/blouse were highly fashionable, although versions were being worn as early as the 1860s. This outfit was then sometimes teamed with a matching jacket which, in effect, created a tailored suit. This mode of dress aligned to an increased uptake of paid work, such as office (mainly secretarial roles) and retail positions. Foner and Garraty (1991, p.384) state:

By the 1860s women on New York streets were wearing jacketed dresses modelled after male suits. Thirty years later these styles had evolved into the shirtwaist, the man-tailored blouse that became emblematic of the clerical working woman. The shirt-waist’s popularity quickly spread upward to higher social classes. (As well, designers’ influence on fashion, particularly Gabrielle ‘Coco’ Chanel, heightened the blouse’s popularity through the tailored suit, in the first part of the twentieth century.)

The early shirt-waist had a tailored collar or a classic round neckline, fitted waist, some detailing such as pleating and some versions buttoned at the rear. From the late nineteenth century, the most prevalent style buttoned down the front and the garment appeared to be fashioned after a man’s shirt. The use of the term shirt-waist remained a popular convention until the 1920s (Calasibetta and Tortora, 2003, p.33 -37).

Social influence of the women’s white shirt

In the late Victorian era, similar to the man’s formal shirt, white cloth for the shirt-waist was linked to ideals of cleanliness and purity. Hence, in the 1890s the white shirt-waist became a highly fashionable garment, as it fulfilled those ideals. This period witnessed the advent of the ‘new woman’ and the white shirt-waist was an iconic symbol of the new independent working class woman (see Anderson’s *The White Blouse Revolution* 1988 for information on period work practices). The white shirt-waist was a powerful representation of a new ethos and as a result became, like the men’s white formal shirt, an archetypical and ubiquitous garment to be worn in the early part of the twentieth century. Paradoxically, the shirt-waist also became a symbol of poor labour conditions, with many women sewing these garments in factories with deplorable work practices. In particular, the tragic fire in the Triangle Shirtwaist factory in New York City in 1911, with the death of 148 workers, acted as a catalyst to highlight poor labour practices. See McEvoy (1995) and Drehle (2004) for information about labour reform as a result of this tragedy.

At the close of the nineteenth century, a new icon – the Gibson Girl – emerged and ideals of female beauty came to represent the new woman. The Gibson Girl embodied changes in lifestyle and gender depiction and personified a break from Victorian social repression. The Gibson Girl image was popularised by the drawings of the American artist Charles Dana Gibson (Foner and Garraty, 1991, p.384). As Breward (1995, p.186) argues, the Gibson Girl encapsulated the new economic power within American society and her caricature embodied freshness and independence. Even though the Gibson Girl image was initially popular in America, it soon expanded abroad where it became a significant influence on fashion styles. The most conspicuous element of her attire was the white shirt-waist, which pouched at the front and created a puffed pigeon breast appearance. The style of dress consisted of a tightly corseted waist, a high-collared neckline, long sleeves and a decorated fitted shirt style with copious amounts of lace and pintucking on the front. Matched to this was a tailored bell-shaped skirt and hair rolled up to give a full appearance (Darnell, 2000, p.9). Through the popularity of the Gibson Girl’s perceived graceful image, new conventions for the ideal silhouette (the S-bend or Gibson bend) were forged. The Gibson Girl was a major influence on the shirt-waist’s heightened popularity and its subsequent associations with femininity and decoration.

Another reason for the increased appeal of the fitted shirt-waist was the adoption of cycling for women in the 1890s. During this period, cycling became enormously popular and it represented a move to a more independent lifestyle that contrasted with Victorian concepts of femininity. Cycling necessitated clothes that were not only practical on a bicycle but also symbolic of the freedom that was encapsulated in this new leisure activity. Consequently, the fitted shirt-waist enabled relative ease of movement, in comparison to the fitted bodice, when women were cycling.

Other factors aided the shirt-waist's popularity. One was the prevalence of fashion journals and the other, which supplemented these publications, was the availability of paper garment patterns. As Craik (1994, p.48-49) argues, the readership for women's magazines escalated enormously in the late Victorian period and this helped to define and spread the influence of the confident new woman. As a result, the wearing of a white shirt-waist was readily taken up through the fashions that were espoused in these magazines. Alongside this, companies such as Butterick produced affordable paper patterns for shirt-waists, and supporting fashion publications such as the *Delineator*, enabled some women to readily produce fashioned garments at a more affordable price. Finally, the rise of the department store, with mass produced items, allowed the shirt-waist to become a common place garment in the early part of the twentieth century. An additional contributing influence was the popularity of mail order companies, such as Sears, as this allowed an ease of access for new fashion styles outside the major urban centres. Discussed next is the other lineage of the women's white shirt – the middie blouse.

The middie-blouse – the other lineage of the women's white shirt

While exact origins of the word are unclear, the term 'blouse' may have been introduced in the early 19th century in France and is likely to have developed from the French word "bliaut" or old French "blialt" – a long loose blue workman's shirt-smock; or from the word 'blouson' meaning 'to blouse'. Use of the word blouse can also be evidenced in the mid 1800s, with the naval middie-blouse. It was a loose fitting midshipman's garment that consisted of a long white skirted shirt that tucked into trousers, with blue decorative banding on the pocket and chest area (Miller, 1997, p.121). Civilian adoption of the term 'blouse' was initially for boys' attire through the wearing of sailor style suits (the middie-blouse) in the mid 1800s and, subsequently, for women's wear in the late nineteenth hundreds.

In the 1880s significant social upheavals were occurring and, as a result of these reforms, women were now undertaking activities that were once previously considered male in domain. Sporting activities were starting to become popular for leisure time. Alongside this, the growing trend for seaside vacations (England) required garments that reflected a more comfortable form. As well, in some schools and colleges, young girls undertook regular gymnasium based exercise. More 'rational' clothes were evolving to match the changing lifestyle for women. Organisations such as the Rational Dress Reform Society were established (1881) to espouse a new aesthetic for dress with alternative and more comfortable garments, such as the bloomer. As part of this shift to a more relaxed form, the middie-blouse was gaining popularity for leisure and physical activities.

This rapid shift in lifestyle enabled sports such as croquet, skating, golf and gymnasium-based activity to develop costumes that had blouse variants – the 1880's gym suit being an example. The gym suit was based on the middie-blouse and, as Warner (2006, p. 203-206) indicates, early variants had sailor collars and were generally matched with baggy bloomers or a divided skirt. This garment, predominately in white cloth, was loose around the waist and generally worn tucked in. Tennis, however, was the principal sport that influenced the blouse. In the early Victorian period tennis costumes were, in the main, restrictive and allowed little concession for playing sport. They consisted of high necked bodices and heavy skirts, although jersey fabrics allowed some degree of movement (Bryde, 1992, p.165-166). By the early 1890s a more comfortable garment, the tennis blouse, had evolved. The tennis blouse consisted of a loose baggy waist, full sleeves, high gathered neckline and use of white cloth. This garment was unusual for the time as it was loose and bloused at the waist, hence the term 'blouse' (Warner, 2006, p.49). Once again, it was based on the naval middie-blouse and this outfit became highly popular in the 1890s for tennis and other leisure sports. At this time the tennis blouse had varying degrees of decoration. However, by the first decade of the twentieth century, it had become unadorned and a plain white shirt styled garment was the preferred choice (Horwood 2002, p. 47-48).

In summary, the loose blouse form appears to have had its origins in the mid 1800s with the naval middie-blouse. This garment shifted to civilian use as a result of shifts in dress norms for women in the late Victorian period. Increased physical activity demanded completely new styles of garments. These garments mirrored a relaxing of 'corseted' Victorian ideals and allowed forms of 'rational' clothing (relative to that time) to emerge.

In the early twentieth-century, the shirt-waist and the (middy-) blouse appear to have cross-influenced two major styles of white shirts for women. By 1914 the blouse/shirt-waist was, in the main, left untucked and the garment was becoming less adorned, straighter in form and sometimes worn with a tie. To all intents and purposes, the shirt-waist was evolving to become part of a silhouette that was aligned to the 'flapper' of the 1920s. As Pendergast and Pendergast (2004, p.686-687) suggest, the blouse/shirt-waist was, in effect, a dropped waist silhouette and it formed the foundation for this subsequent new look. Entwistle (2000, p.171) states: "[t]he 1920s 'flapper' represents the first expression of something approximating to an androgynous look". (The design influence from Paul Pioret is considered to have acted as a precursor for this look). Therefore, by the end of World War One it was fashionable to wear a style of dress for the upper body that was decidedly menswear in style.

In conclusion, both forms of the shirt, the fitted (shirt-waist) and the relaxed (blouse), have a complex and interwoven history. They are aligned to labour reforms, female emancipation and changes to dress norms. The 1890s were a critical period for the shirt as the shift from a fitted bodice to a more 'rational' form was evolving. Increased leisure activities for women, such as cycling and sport, influenced the need to move from Victorian rigidity to a softer silhouette, such as the blouse. In this period, even though some forms were highly decorated and relatively loose in fit, it acted as a foundational catalyst for women adopting men's shirt characteristics as part of their spectrum of dress in the twentieth century and beyond. Similar to the men's white formal shirt, the women's shirt, in all its variant guises, has been an enduring form with important cultural significance, and is therefore also worthy of iconic status.

Conclusion

A cultural icon is an object that is widely and readily familiar to the general public and has considerable historical cultural importance to diverse social groups. In Western society, icons of fashion are diverse and the list is certainly arguable: the classic black dress, Levi's 501 jeans, the Burberry trench coat, Yves Saint Laurent pant suit, Christian Dior's pencil skirt, Mary Quant's mini skirt and perhaps the Aloha Shirt; however, the ubiquitous classic white formal shirt is generally off the radar for iconic status. This widely familiar and recognisable item of apparel is omnipresent, season after season in both men's and women's fashion, and is essentially unadulterated in form from the late nineteenth century. This underrated garment, which has had enormous social impact over the last one hundred and fifty years (particularly in Victorian times), has been connected to social reform, class structures, status and power, gender ideals and norms of dress; and is accordingly worthy of consideration for icon status.

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From the glorious past to the inspired present: tracing Indian heritage fashion from the maharani's to the current luxurious Indian ethnic wear.

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I am a student of the masters course in fashion marketing. I completed my schooling from Carmel Convent School, New Delhi and my graduation from the University Of Delhi as a Political Science (honours) student. I belong to a business family and aim to become an entrepreneur in the near future. I have good instincts as a marketer and am confident in my approach.

Abstract

Purpose: *This paper aims to explain how the royal designs and regional cultures have influenced contemporary Indian ethnic designers.*

Design/approach: *This paper is based on primary and secondary research from magazine articles, current runway shows and research papers on the royal lifestyle and also visits to design boutiques in Jaipur, India. It tracks the evolution of Indian ethnic wear through the ages through a relative approach. A small section is also dedicated to Indian jewellery art.*

Findings: *It was found that even though Indian ethnic wear was deeply rooted in tradition, the lifestyle of the royalty had a European edge to it. This made royalty such as Maharani Gayatri Devi global icons. She was once described by Vogue magazine as “a dream in a Sari and jewels “. Maharani Gayatri Devi charmed world icons such as Queen Victoria and Jackie Kennedy with her splendour and grace. Thus it was found modern Indian designers are trying to emulate the same charm in their collections. The designers want to bring an edge of royalty to Indian ethnic wear. The designer Priya Katariya Puri recently presented a collection paying tribute to the “rajmata of Jaipur”.*

Originality/Value: *This paper identifies how current luxurious Indian ethnic fashion is a reflection of the grand lifestyle and charm of ancient Indian royalty, it seeks to preserve our cultural heritage.*

Background

Far away from Indian Fashion a quote by Coco Chanel very well sums up what Indian fashion is about. “Fashion is not something that exists in dresses only. Fashion is in the sky, in the street fashion has to do with ideas, the way we live, what is happening.”(Harper’s Bazaar, 2012)

The clothing worn in modern India is a result of the evolution of ethnic attire over centuries. Most of the inspiration we see on runway shows of big designers is a result of inspiration drawn from the past. The other factor influencing fashion in India is the diversity that this country offers in terms of culture, ethnicity and every area has its own unique attire. We can very easily identify which region a woman comes from by looking at the clothes she wears. The most identifiable outfit globally for India is the *Sari*, to the world the clothes that traditional Indian women wear appear to be “Costumes”, this term is used here is because the traditional Indian woman not only wears a piece of clothing but also matching ornaments, footwear and apt hairstyling. These costumes are not only beautiful to look at but they are also very functional. A woman does not need to belong to an upper class home to dress beautifully on a daily basis, dressing up is a part of their culture – it gives them an identity. Thus women from every background are dressed appropriately at all times.

Thus our heritage is our USP. The craftsmanship which has been handed down from many empires like the Mughal Empire is very much a part of the Indian Culture. This art of turning gold into thread has not died down even after the fall of these empires because our culture has been moulded that way. In the 21st century, where the modern Indian woman is clad in western formals, the day she gets married she will wear ethnic Indian clothes and will not look any less than a Mughal empress on her special day. This demand for

Keywords: region, heritage, cultural identity, contemporary, couture, inspiration, royalty

Indian ethnic wear will never die down, thus the presence of luxury Indian designers is ever growing. These designers have given Indian couture a place in global fashion while preserving the traditional textiles and craftsmanship.

Regional Influences

Every region in India comes with a special identity. Even within the same village a diverse range of cultures exist, it is astonishing how these different cultures live in coherence. The colours, the surroundings and the people are all inspiring to a fashion enthusiast.

The most unique thing about Indian fashion is the use of traditional handicrafts and textiles that were used centuries ago are still viable in the contemporary fashion industry. The contemporary designers create a beautiful combination of textiles within each of their collections, such collections become exclusive and are practically impossible to mass produce. One of the pioneers in the fashion industry for promoting traditional textiles and giving them a modern and wearable edge is Ritu Kumar. Let us take a look at certain areas in the country whose history has inspired path breaking collections. Since the modern Indian finds western clothes more appealing, Indian designers have found a way to create modern clothing using local fabrics, thus preserving the past and putting it centre stage as the hero of the collection. Let us isolate and look at a few regions of India which define contemporary fashion in many ways.

1. **Gujarat:** Rural fashion of Gujarat has been a hero in modern Indian fashion for a very long time and every time a new designer finds a way to rediscover the land and present an inspiring collection. Gujarati fashion is famous for its sexy backless blouses also known as *cholis*, colourful tie-dye work on garments known as *Bandhani* and beautiful mirror work on garments. The Indian designer duo Abraham & Thakore recently presented a collection inspired by the evergreen elements of Gujarati fashion. Every detail of traditional fashion is made edgy and modern in these collections and at the same time its true nature is reflected in the clothes. Even modern Indian designers turn to the skilled craftsmen of Gujarat who have refined their skills over generations and such work cannot be duplicated by anyone.
2. **Rajasthan:** Adjoining Gujarat, this is a rich land, a land which has a royal past and gives a feeling of grandeur when one visits, this Indian state is so rich in Royal heritage that it is a hub for Indian designers. It is a land where of beautiful palaces and till date the royal families reside in those palaces. The architecture the grand lifestyles of the Maharaja's are all a source of inspiration. Rajasthan is known for a lot of traditional handicrafts like artisanal brass work, wood carving and this area too is famous for its mirror work which is infused with its embroidery, this work is also known as Jaisalmer mirror embroidery. This craftsmanship is of Persian influence but is very much a part of the Rajasthani legacy. Rajasthan is also famous for traditional craft work known as *gota work or lappe ka kaam*. Traditionally, *Gota* ribbons were woven with a warp of flattened gold and silver wire and a weft of silk/cotton thread and used as functional and decorative trims for a variety of garments and textiles used by the royalty, members of the court, temple idols and priests, as well as for altar cloths at shrines and prayer offerings. (Arch Academy of design, 2007).
3. **Lucknow:** The land of *Nawabs*, Lucknow is a region in Uttar Pradesh India which is famous for *Chikan Kari*. This is a form of detailed embroidery. It is said that Nur Jahan the wife of the famous Mughal emperor Jahangir introduced this form of embroidery. This form of embroidery is of Persian origin. *Chikan Kari* work is done on cotton fabric and includes a variety of unique stitches like the *zanjeera* or the chain stitch is only used on the final outline of a leaf, petal or stem. *Chikan* work includes forty different kinds of stitches out of which 30 are currently in use. These stitches can be divided into three basic categories- flat stitches, raised stitches and embossed stitches. *Chikan* work and the variety of stitches that go into the making of this hand-made fabric. Contemporary designers like Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla have made the art of *Chikan kari* chic. They have made it a part of several collections and have sometimes added detailing of beads and Swarovski elements to make it modern.

The Royal Connect

India has an army of haute couture designers; there is a constant rise in demand for traditional Indian apparel. This is because our local culture demands it. India is a land of many rituals and customs. Those customs demand women and men to be dressed in traditional apparel. The biggest customs in India are associated with Indian weddings. Every step of an Indian wedding is wrapped up in grandeur and tradition. This is where the demand for Indian luxury apparel arises. The Indian bride aspires to look like a royal princess on her special day and she does. Those brides who can afford it spend millions on her wedding trousseaus. The bride is passed down precious jewellery from her family and also buys precious jewellery which is traditional yet contemporary enough to be wearable.

If we were to compare how an average Indian bride dresses up on her wedding to a royal princess we would not be able to mark the difference between the two. Thus Indian designers create outfits which are fit for royalty but are wearable by the modern Indian bride. Since the modern Indian bride is western in her tastes, designers create collections with modern silhouettes using traditional fabric and colours. Let us take designer **Manav Gangwani** who recently did a collection called "A Royal Affaire" with a perfect mix of bling and glamour. He used satin, silk and heavy embroidery. His work is an example of contemporary styling and is also fit for a modern Indian bride to be.

Designer **Sabyasachi Mukherjee** is another pioneer for bridal collections in India. His work involves using a lot of traditional fabrics and Indian crafts of *gota*, *zardozi*, *block printing*. His collections are not at all westernized. His work is always classic, chic and has a vintage feel to it. The detailing in his work is breath taking.

Let us take a real time Queen of Jaipur and how she was an inspiration for millions of people in India and around the world and how her presence inspired the fashion industry. Maharani Gayatri Devi was the epitome of grace and opulence, she was an ambassador for India around the world. International figures like the Queen of England, Mick Jagger and Jackie Onassis were personal friends of the Maharani and were all praises about her personality. Recently designer Priya Kataria Puri who was a big fan of the Maharani, launched a collection inspired by her. It was a Trousseau collection for an Indian bride and bold colours and embellishments were used in the collection. It is this sense of royalty and luxury that drives the Indian consumer to invest in designer couture. The bride who spends a huge amount on her wedding ensemble may not wear it again but she gets to feel and look like a queen for one day, that factor alone is enough for her to buy couture. The entire ambience of the Indian wedding is nothing less than a royal event. Thus designers all over the world look at India for inspiration, for there is no other place in the world which is so rich in culture and ethnicity.

Jewellery

Indians love their jewellery, no matter what financial background an Indian belongs to, we love investing in precious jewellery specially gold. We have one of the biggest gold reserves in the world because in India gold is an asset. It also has an auspicious and emotional sentiment attached to it. We also have auspicious days like *Dhanteras*, a day when Indians are supposed to buy an article of gold whether it is big or small. Gold is considered equivalent to hard cash, thus it is a form of security for a family.

Jewellery is a high selling commodity in India and one can find beautiful ethnic jewellery in India. One can find a variety of designs and most of them are influenced by our royal past. Many forms of detailed work on jewellery were introduced by the large number of empires that ruled India. Each of them have influenced the art of making jewellery in India today. Indian settings of precious jewellery are unique and are extremely diversified - *Polki*, *Meenakari*, *Jadau*, *Kundan* and many more. Let us take a look at one example.

Meenakari: is a form of enamelling on metal. This art is of Persian origin brought to India by the Mughals. Today this art is best found in Rajasthan where it has been perfected over centuries. This art has till date maintained its value because of the demand of precious jewellery in India - Bangles, necklaces, earrings and many other accessories are decorated with Meenakari.

Conclusion

India's past is unparalleled to any other culture in the world. We have a history of being conquered by outside forces. Britain ruled India for a period of two hundred years and before that a long line of Mughal emperors ruled our land. This has given us diversity and deep rooted culture. Every inch of India breathes its own sense of individuality and we find our self at a turning era where that aura is being used as inspiration for the arts, in this case the fashion industry. The Indian haute couture industry is growing at an un parallel rate and is taking over the world with its roots and uniqueness. The world appreciates the Indian essence of grandeur presented by the designers. This art of the inspired will only see a bloom in the coming generations and take it to a level which is only anticipated in fables.

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The Life of a Shoe: Past, Present, Future

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Kate Medved is Vice Academic Coordinator at Whitehouse Institute of Design, Australia and is based at the Melbourne Campus. As a design professional her career included fashion, marketing and promotion, and graphic design. Kate graduated from University of Technology Sydney in 2003 with a Master of Design. Kate is a key member of the design staff working in the Vocational and Bachelor sectors of the Institute, from the delivery of illustration and design workshops to mentoring students through their graduate projects. Kate is currently working on her design practice incorporating design/art projects which she hopes to launch mid 2013 with an exhibition. Kate is passionate about design communication, and is currently preparing a proposal for a PhD candidacy in the design field.

Abstract

This paper focuses on footwear and its iconic status in cultures and subcultures in the past, present and future.

“In archetypal symbolism feet represent mobility and freedom. In that sense to have shoes to cover the feet is to have the conviction of our beliefs and the wherewithal to act on them” Clarissa Pinkola Estes

Reading and interpreting women’s shoes, this paper will investigate the cultural foot dress of Historic Europe as well as draw upon contemporary shoe design. The paper will explore shoes as iconic objects and will endeavour to draw parallels between the past, present and future. Attitudes, moods and aesthetics showcasing shoes exhibiting life, love, lust and culture will be exhibited.

The study will highlight to the shoe’s status as an icon. The psychology of footwear, and the experience and practices of life, memory, culture and design will evidence the shoe’s iconic status.

The paper will broadly touch on; Symbolism of culture, symbolism of icons, design, materiality and fashion through original material culture research, traditional historical narratives, typologies of the ornamentation of feet and beauty, nomenclature, the shoe, aesthetics influenced and informed by cultural upbringing and memory, shoe research; the narrative interpretation of cultural and contemporary design. Investigation of mobility, communities, cultural influence of dress and the psychology of personal aesthetics through footwear and contemporary design will highlight the future of the iconic shoe.

As Clark supports, (1972) “you hope to make a valuable addition to knowledge on a subject you believe to be important” (p.10).

Introduction

Estes (unknown) states, “In archetypal symbolism feet represent mobility and freedom. In that sense to have shoes to cover the feet is to have the conviction of our beliefs and the where withal to act on them”¹ An argument can be made that this statement would support the notion that footwear would represent a sense of power to the wearer. This paper will focus on footwear and the iconic status it represents in cultures and subcultures past, present and future.

Traditionally and historically footwear was a form of protection of the feet for mobility. Roman Empires and their royal courts highlight that social status is a distinguishing factor of the affordability of footwear that reflect a superior style. The distinguishing factor in contemporary culture can be reflected in marketing and branding principles. Contemporary culture challenges shoes and the association of necessity as the defining factor and need for footwear.

Why do we associate a person’s style in association with the shoes one wears? Can notions of identity be connected with the shoes that one wears? *Manolo Blahnik* (unknown) states that, “Shoes help transform a woman”. Investigating shoes within the context of contemporary television series *Sex and the City* (HBO, 1998-2004), we may note a transformative function as characters such as Carrie Bradshaw and Samantha are notably more exotic, sexual or powerful through their choice of shoe. As it has already been stated, film and television informs one’s memory within certain social contexts a shoe style may make one feel sexy, noticeable, desirable and powerful. These parallels can be applicable to all genders.

A microcosm of today’s consumer market places the context of the shoe. As fashion is concerned with the adornment of the body; therefore it stands to reason that shoes are the foundation of that adornment. In building practices the most fundamental starting point is making sure that the foundations will hold up the structure, we could say that based on that model shoes are the foundation for fashioning the body.

Twain (unknown) states “Clothes make the man. Naked people have little or no influence on society”². We have over time adapted this quote to suit contemporary culture as “the shoes maketh the man”. Such an adaptation shows the immense importance social culture in the present day has placed on shoes.

Shoes As Iconic Objects

What defines an Icon? An Icon’s definition may have many valid interpretations. Icons can be described as “a person or thing regarded as a representative symbol or as worthy of veneration” (Dictionaries, 2010). Icons may be religious artefacts as a symbolic representation or even people. Becoming Iconic implies recognition (commonly referred to as fame), power, respect, longevity and/or meaning. With this definition, one can justify shoes as iconic symbols that represent power, recognition and meaning by their design and design status. We can say that there has been a distinctive rise of awareness of a person’s choice of footwear. Social culture has played an extremely crucial part in the heightened awareness of one’s footwear.

Shoes’ iconic state can in part be attributed to contemporary pop culture. They have become famous and recognisable by their growing importance and emphasis in film and television. To state the obvious one of the most popular television shows of this generation, which brought shoes and Manolos to every home, would have to be *Sex and the City*’s airing from June 1998- February 2004. This is not to say that shoes were idle and unassuming before the show’s existence. The popularity of the television series brought an identity and memory of the designer shoe to the average household. The likes of a Monolo became as essential an item to one’s wardrobe as was any household appliance to one’s kitchen. We give thanks to character Carrie Bradshaw and her obsession with beautiful shoes as it made women around the world feel as though the unattainable (the designer shoe) was attainable.

We are able to draw many parallels with shoes historically to attitudes, moods and aesthetics in the present. The Pianelle style shoe could be identified as an adaptation now called the platform shoe. Platforms added height to the wearer with a sense of comfort due to the relatively flat sole. Where in the 1400’s there were actual height restrictions to heels/platforms, we do not see those same restrictions placed on shoe designers today. We have seen the rise and fall of heel heights and in present trends we see many accepted combinations gracing the catwalks and streets.

Interestingly, the height of one’s shoes between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries revealed many things about the wearer. Stylistically what could be identified as the same shoe had real identifiers that represented status and identity by subtle changes in heel heights. A thickness of sole or as we like to identify today as height of shoe, one could be identified as a commoner or a noblewoman. A few inches were all it took to identify social distinction of the wearer. History affords us insights into the significance of shoes playing pivotal roles in “social positioning, mobility and attraction” (McNeill, 2006). “Meaning does indeed require a decoding of meanings and unique understanding of nuances of the time in question”. (McNeill, 2006)

We learn from history that the subtleties do not elude us in the present. Style, height and materiality identified social status historically, in the present one’s variations of shoe styles, shapes, materiality, heel heights, and social context can get complicated in the identifying characteristics of social etiquette and standing. In fact, we use symbolic information to label people by what they wear on a daily basis.

If heel heights and materiality determined a person’s social status and identity in centuries past, what then can we use as identity markers today? An obvious answer would be that designer labels and their exclusivity (price point allocation) would ensure a sense of social status and demographic division from the masses.

Carrie Bradshaw throughout the six seasons of *Sex and the City* consistently turns to shoe shopping and shoes to solve her life’s challenges. She refers to her shoe addiction as “having a little substance abuse problem, expensive footwear”. Whilst Carrie moves through her life in *Sex and the City* so does her complexity with her shoe relationship. In season 2 episode 1, Carrie finds herself single after a whirlwind romance with Mr. Big. The social etiquette of dress code after a break up according to Carrie is “risk overdressed versus the chance of meeting with Mr. Big for the first time, looking the way I feel” reveals the power and

symbolism of dress. The contemporary shoe narrative unfolds throughout the seasons and tells a story of gained recognition, power and motion.

History affords us insights into the significance of the Shoe and despite being a microcosm of the architecture of fashioning the body it plays a pivotal role in “social positioning, mobility and attraction” (McNeill, 2006) which is disproportionate to actual physical size.

Shoes Today and Beyond

Presently we place a large emphasis on shoes and how they complete one's look. This can be called the curse of the design trend. No longer is acceptance of style for social classes dictated by government and church, but rather by the designer and the design trend that governs one's own aesthetic.

We adhere to social tradition rather than historic tradition, but we can witness history's preservation in the present in that many of the shoe styles and attitudes we wear and see today are adaptations from the past.

Memory does drive one's attitudes and responses to social etiquette. Pallasmaa states “We behold, touch, listen and measure the world with our entire bodily existence, and the experiential world becomes organised and articulated around the centre of the body. Our domicile is the refuge of our body, memory and identity. We are in constant dialogue and interaction with the environment, to the degree that it is impossible to detach the image of the Self from its special and situational existence.” (Pallasmaa, 2005 p.64)

Different shoe styles have different meanings. One's relationship with ceremony and occasion helps to decide whether a style would be acceptable to wear for any given occasion. This can be attributed to memory, cultural influences, psychology of aesthetics, notions of beauty and social responsibilities.

Reflecting on memories in the form of fairy tales and their influences and impacts on life's attitude to shoes we remember the stories of Cinderella and her glass slipper, the magic red shoes in the Wizard of Oz, through to pop culture of shoes being the focus in musical tracks such as Kate Bush's Red Shoes. Carrie states, (season 4, episode 16, 2002) “it wasn't quite as easy as clicking my Manolo Blahnik's 3 times, but it was worth it. I was home”. The reference to The Wizard of Oz whilst signing her loan paperwork is a reflection of memory and culture. In season 4, episode 17 (2002) when faced with a pair of Manolo Blahnik, Mary Janes Carrie states “Do you know what these are? Manolo Blahnik, Mary Janes! I thought these were an urban shoe myth”. Whilst writing an article on men and shoes for Vogue in the same episode her Vogue editor asks “What does Carrie Bradshaw know about shoes?” Carrie replies “With all due respect, men I may not know, but shoes, shoes I know”, in response her editor laughs disbelieving her claim to knowing shoes. The psychology of one's attachment to shoes is personal and possible immeasurable.

History dictated materiality and height of shoe to determine ceremony and social standing, today we would predominantly determine style or shoe design with the occasion and ceremony. Looking to today and beyond we would not measure a shoe's social relevance with finite criteria as demonstrated throughout history.

Our love of shoes today forms a sense of escapism. Putting on a special pair of shoes empowers and invites oneself to transform. Authors create fictional worlds, so it is fair to state that designers create shoe worlds. Designers are enablers of escapism through a season's new shoe trend.

Popularity and fame of a shoe style comes to the fore through popular culture of films and television. Salvatore Ferragamo fashioned shoes and pioneered many styles early in his career as a shoe designer. He opened his first US store in Hollywood when the film industry moved there in 1923. Ferragamo's A-List (celebrity list) included the likes of Greta Garbo, Bette Davis, Gloria Swanson and Joan Crawford in the 1920's and continued to appeal to Hollywood celebrities in the late 1940's, including the likes of Katherine Hepburn, Sofia Loren, Audrey Hepburn and Marilyn Monroe to name a few.

In popular culture, the likes of Manolo Blahnik and Jimmy Choo feature regularly on the world stage and bring a beautiful escapism through exquisite materiality for the feet.

It is then 'Fait Accompli' that for occasions deemed noteworthy we would go that extra mile and ensure that her feet would be adorned with a Heeled shoe that showcases a life representing love, beauty and cultural context. "High heels have been seen as sexy since at least the seventeenth century" (DeMello, 2009). The very nature of wearing heels has a profound influence on a females posture which is the sheer essence of what makes high heels sexy. DeMello (2009) states, "with high heels a woman's spine curves, the hips and buttocks thrust out, the breasts are thrust forward, the legs elongated, and the gait changes. Finally high heels make the feet appear smaller, which in itself has been valued and sexualised around the world."

Our culture encourages adornment of the body in the contemporary context. The psychology of footwear, and the experience and practices of life, memory, culture and design evidences the shoe's iconic and growing status.

The present and the future will continue to see a growth in the importance of shoe design. Society today places significant emphasis and importance on beauty. This is reflected by the trend for designers and fashion labels today to own shoe collections, accessories lines and cosmetics lines.

Therefore if "the clothes make the man" (Twain, unknown) then I would argue "the shoes make the woman".

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Evolution of Indian Silk Saree Brands and its influence on people and culture

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Abstract

Women in India like to wear Silk Sari on festive and religious occasions which would make them feel proud and add traditional value to their families. It also gives a royal feeling to the individual. In Early 1920s silk sari retail sales were started by the cooperative societies in their own manufacturing hubs like Kanchipuram & Banarass etc., In the later part of 1920s, a few societies were converted into retail shops in major cities after which they started many more retail outlets Pan India. These retailers procure the silk sari from the major silk sari weavers in the manufacturing hubs for their retail store. In the early 1980s, sari retailers used to sell silk sari as a product for all the occasions and people used to wear silk sari for all occasions in their family.

When fashion evolved in India, retailers & weavers understood the importance of color, design and pattern in the silk sari design process and people started to adapt this new fashion in silk sari wardrobe for specific occasions. Considering these parameters few retailers have formulized sari brands for specific occasions, for an example marriage occasions like Muhurtham, Nalungu, Nichiyartham etc...In these saris, the major design elements and colors depicts the specific occasional elements of their religion. Few retailers formulized a new brands depicting the character, beauty and body feature of the women in their sari such as Samudrika, Vasundra, Parampara etc., to enhance or replicate the beauty and character of the women in silk sari.

This paper explores on how sari brands uses the occasion or women's characteristics of their own community in adopting new brand building ideas to promote silk products which enhances and stabilizes the traditional and religious values of the community.

1. Introduction to Indian Silk Sari

Sari (pudavai) are woven with one plain end (the end that is concealed inside the wrap), two long decorative borders running the length of the sari, and a one to three foot section at the other end which continues and elaborates the length-wise decoration. This end is called the pallu; it is the part thrown over the shoulder in the nivi style of draping.

Hand-woven, hand-decorated sari are naturally much more expensive than the machine imitations. While are the over-all market for hand weaving has plummeted (leading to much distress among Indian hand weavers), hand-woven sari are still popular for weddings in all Indian communities and other grand social occasions in India and sari has various diversified products such as skirt and half-sari to the Indian women.

1.1 Origin & History of Silk Sari

The etymology of the word sari or saree is from the Sanskrit word 'sati', which means strip of cloth. This evolved into the Prakrit 'sadi' and was later anglicized into sari /saree.

Indian civilization has always placed a tremendous importance on unstitched fabrics like the sari and dhoti, which are given sacred overtones. The belief was that such a fabric was pure; in past needles of bone were used for stitching. Hence even to the present day, while attending pujas or other sacred ceremonies, the men dress up in dhotis while women wear the sari.

The Indian Sari, like so many other textiles, gives the lie to the hierarchical distinction made between fine arts and crafts. The approximate size of a sari is 47 by 216 inches. Although it is an untailored length of



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Keywords: Saree Brands, Silk Saree, Tradition, Occasion

cloth, the fabric is highly structured and its design vocabulary very sophisticated. The main field of the sari is framed on three sides by a decorative frieze of flowering plants, figurative images, paisleys, or abstract symbols.

Two of the borders define the edges of the length of the sari and the third comprises the end piece, which is a more complex version of the other two borders. This end piece is the part of the sari that is draped over the shoulder and left to hang over the back or front, known popularly as the Pallu or Anchal.

The pallu usually elaborates the theme found in the two borders and the actual field of the sari, a sort of repetition and amplification in the manner of the Indian musical mode the raga. This beautiful metaphor thus compares the two narrow borders to the introductory recital of the pure notes and the pallu to the song.

The design of the Indian Sari whether woven, embroidered, painted or block-printed needs to maintain the proportion and balance between the actual field of the sari, The pattern creates its own rhythm. Each sari in the modern era requires a matching set of blouse and underskirt for draping it. All sari in the collection come along with a matching blouse fabric piece.



Fig No : 1

2. Weaving Clusters in Indian Silk Sari Production

The sari is the traditional outfit of women in India and the Indian subcontinent. This glamorous, yet demure outfit first originated in Southern India and today has gained enough popularity to symbolize itself as an Indian heritage and legacy. The reputation of the sari has spread so much that even women from other parts of the world of different nationalities and cultures are also taking an active interest in it.

Identifying the weaving clusters in India, there are many places where the silk sari designed & produced in India. And these sectors depict their traditional values of patterns and color in their silk sari and the material which they use in the sari is availability of their local resources. Example the materials are silk, cotton, Kora silk, and Art Silk etc.

The following places majorly produce the silk sari in Indian sari weaving clusters:-

2.1 Assam

Assam the state having highest number of handlooms in India is unique with its silk weaving culture in the handloom sector. Fly shuttle handlooms and 120 hook jacquards are mainly used in the Assam for silk weaving. Traditional designs and products still are the major type of fabrics woven for the domestic market.

2.2 Bhagalpur

Bhagalpur holds a vital position in the hearts of silk-lovers is known as one of the important producer of quality Silk. This Cluster is famous for its silk based dress materials, sari, scarves, stoles and home furnishings etc. The Handloom industry in Bhagalpur makes around 2 million meters of silk per annum. The turnover of Bhagalpur is around 50 crores annually. The cluster is divided among seven villages are ChampaNagar, Purani, Hussainabad, Aliganj, Kharik Bazaar, Nathnagar and Ambabaug. The geographical climate here is apt for rearing Tassar cocoon and the reared silk is known as Tassar/Tusah Silk. The specialties of Silk are Tassar, Muga, Katia, Ghiccha, Mulberry and Eri silks. Katia and Ghiccha are the varieties of Tassar Silk that has a rough touch.

2.3 Varanasi (Banaras)

Banaras sari are the hallmarks of the today's modern fashion world. It is a must wear attire for women who want to look elegant and yet sober and sophisticated. It is popular in Bengali weddings but rather these types of sari are desired by every woman regardless of social status or religion. Indian women clad in these elegant sari regardless their knack for the Western culture. These sari are getting really popular day by day and women from various ethnicities and backgrounds have started to demand these banaras sari.

2.4 Tamilnadu (Kancheepuram)

Kancheepuram is known as the “Silk Paradise” of the world. These sari woven from pure mulberry silk and embellished with fine Gold thread (zari) are known for its dazzling colors and are available in every design and variety that one can think of in the early years till a century and a half back. Primarily Kancheepuram was a cotton weaving center, this scenario has changed today. The pinch better-woven and more expensive silk sari are from Kancheepuram. Introduction of computerized Jacquard borders in Kancheepuram Silk sari has proved to be a boon to Kancheepuram which is getting its past glory

Kancheepuram sari are very heavy and gorgeous and specially used for marriages in South India as their traditional wedding sari. Kanchipuram produces sari with designs that are heavy in both style and fabric weight with very wide borders. In fact, the main feature of Kancheepuram Sari is the time consuming method of interlocking its weft colors as well as its end piece in the process of creating solid borders “Pallu” and a solid “Mundhi”.

3. Types of Silk Sari

When classifying the silk sari in Indian weaving clusters its depends upon the following factors:-

1. Cluster Wise Silk Sari
2. Materials & Techniques Wise Silk Sari

3.1 Cluster Wise Silk Sari

The major silk sari clusters in India are Assam, Bhagalpur, Varanasi and Kanchipuram apart from these, few places are around these sectors are also produce the silk sari. The following popular sari are produced in the Indian clusters:-

Banarasi Sari	Dharmavarapu Sari	Puttapakshi Sari
Kanchipuram Sari	Gadhwal Sari	Baluchari Sari
Bandhni Sari	Uppadapattu Sari	Narayanpet Sari
Thancoi Sari	Chanderi Sari	Kasavu Sari
Paithani Sari	Kota Sari	Sambalpuri Sari
Pochampalli Sari	Jamawars Sari	Dhaniakhali Sari
Konrad Sari	Mysore Sari	Murshidabad Sari
Kumbakonam Sari	Chanderi Sari	Abrawans Sari
Venkatagiri Sari	Bavanjipet Sari	Shikargarh Sari
Aamru Sari	Tancois Sari	Kandanghi Sari

Table :1

3.2 Materials & Technique Wise Silk Sari

The sari which are produced in the materials and technique wise from the various clusters are mentioned below:-

Table : 2

Type of Sari	Place of Production	Material / Technique
Kora Cotton Sari	Coimbatore	Made up of Cotton Warp & Weft
Pashmeena Sari	Kashmir	Made of Wool
Ikat Sari	Orissa Andhra Pradesh	Resist Dyeing Technique (Tie & Dye in Warp Yarn)
Bandhani Sari	Jaipur	Tie & Dye
Tissue Sari	Surat	Made of Finest Polyester Filaments
Kora silk Sari	Coimbatore	Made up of Cotton Warp & Silk Weft
Kota Doria Sari	Kota	Made up of Cotton Warp & Silk Weft
Jamdani Sari	Bengal	Made up of 100% Cotton. Specially made for Muslim Community
Embroidered Sari		Ornamented with Machine or Hand Embroidery
Tussar/ Kosa Sari	Jharkhand	Made up of Tussar Silk
Muga Sari	Sualkuchi	Made up of Muga Silk or Gold Silk
Khadi Sari	Sambalpuri	Made up of Hand Spun Cotton

The mentioned above sectors are manipulating the various natural and synthetic materials instead of silk according to the price of the sari by the retailers.

4. Origin of Silk Sari Retailers

Origin of the silk sari retailers started the weavers to the cooperative societies then its followed by the retailers. The below chart shows the progress growth of silk sari retail industry:-

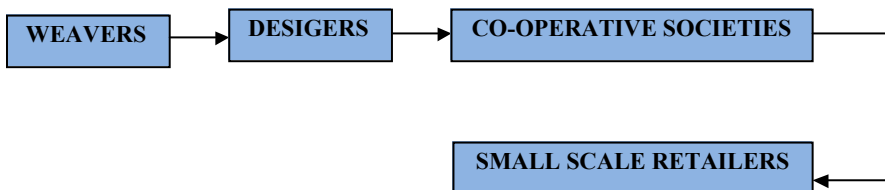


Chart : 1

4.1 Weavers

Before the Independence of India in the year 1947, Silk sari sold directly from the weavers to customer. Most of the weavers had 2 – 4 looms in their house, they used to procure the yarn from the mills and they have their own yarn dyeing unit. Any one of the family member especially a women used to draw the design in a paper and then converted into graph for the sari weaving. In this stage, the customers will meet the weavers directly to buy a sari. During the time of independence time, economy of the people is very less and few people wear 100% of silk sari to show their richness in the society. And the production rate of sari weaving sector are less than the recent days.

4.2 Designers

Work nature of the designers used to design a sari from the various inspiration paths, for an example:-

1. Nature (Trees, Leafs, Flower , Sun, Moon etc.,)
2. Temple & Sculpture elements
3. Fruits & Animals (Mangos, Grapes, Elephant, Peacock etc.,)
4. Depiction of Traditional Indian Dramas (Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagwad Gita etc.,)

In the traditional period, designers used to draw a motif, repeats, and layouts manually, But in the recent days CAD/CAM System are implemented in most of the weaving clusters.

4.3 Cooperative Societies

Cooperative Societies started by the master weavers who have higher looms in the initial period. Generally people who higher economy status in the weaving cluster has used to start the cooperative society. Initially these societies are private sector. Recently few societies are taken over by the Government. All these societies are tied up the local retailers in the nearby areas.

4.4 Small Scale Retailers

Procure the lower to middle range priced silk and silk blended sari from the cooperative society to their store. This small scale retailer sells the allied silk products also into their store. These stores majorly focus the lower and middle class economy status customers.

4.5 Large Scale Retailers

Large scale retailers majorly set the trends in the silk sari business. These retailers have their own weaving shed & designers. They won't buy the product from the cooperative societies. They analyze the market trends and needs from the customers to produce a sari after that they interpret the color & fashion trends in the sari designing. They type of retailers sells the sari from the price range of Rs.10,000-Rs.1,20000. These retailers are trend setters in the sari industry; they have various branches in all over the India as well internationally. Ex. Nalli Silks have their International stores in US, UK, Singapore and Malaysia.

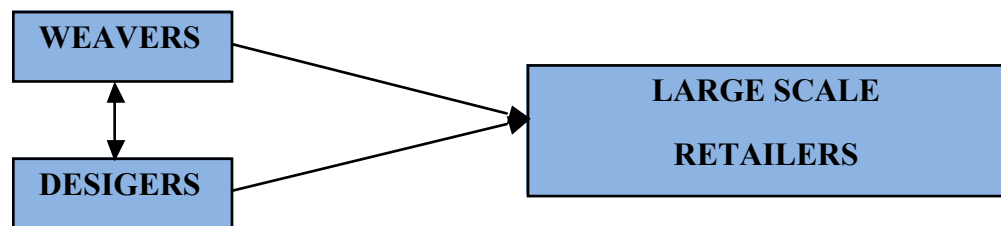


Chart : 2

5. Sari & its Occasions

Sari is a regular and common clothing product in India. But some time people want to depict their culture and community in their wardrobe. During this period, women/girl are interested to show their beauty or enhance their richness in their family. In connection to that each religious people have their own festive to celebrate their happiness and joy in their family in the period of occasion time.

The following table shows the common festive occasions in India from the various religions and how people show case their sari during this period in terms of design and colors.

Table :3

TYPE OF SARI	RELIGION	FESTIVE OCCASION
Arangetram Sari	Hindu	Silk sari made for a Girl/ Women to the Classical South Indian Dance Festival called "Bharatanatyam". In these type of sari majorly depicts the elements from the traditional dance movements from Bharatham
Christmas Sari	Christian	Sari made for "Christmas". Depicts the design elements like Christmas tree, Santa Claus etc.,
Deepavali Sari	Hindu	"Deepavali" means "festival of lights". The Sari mainly depicting the design elements as Deepa Vilaku, Crackers, God of Rama and Seetha etc.,
Grahaprevesam Sari	Hindu	A Sari made for women for their house warming ceremony. In these sari elements like Palkudam, Agnee, Panner Sombu etc., used to depict the function.
Mahendi or Mehendi Sari	Hindu & Musilm	Festive from northern side of India to celebrate the mehendi festival during the marriage period. The sari which is made for this occasion inspired from mehendi art.
Muhurtham Sari	Hindu	A proper wedding time for a bride to take up the "thali" from the groom in the marriage function is called "Muhurtham". Sari which is worn by groom depicts the elements like Thali, Pal Sambu, Cococunt, Gods like Rama, Seetha, Krishna Etc.,
Nalungu Sari	Hindu	Nalungu is a function, when the marriages used to occur at a younger age (early teens). This component was incorporated to keep the mood light-hearted and fun for the newly wed young teens. Traditional games include the newly-weds putting their hands into a small bowl to find a small object who finds the object first is the winner. Other examples of games include breaking papadums over each other's heads and so on and so forth. It is an interesting component of the wedding gala. Sari worn by the bride depicting the elements like flowers, depicting the god etc., and sari made with vibrant colors
New-year Sari	Christian	This festive is a common function to all Particularly for the Christian, women wear a silk sari depicting new year elements like stars, candles etc.,

Nichiyathartham or Thaamboolam Sari	Hindu	<p>The guests settle down at the mandapam to witness and bless the rites and rituals involved in the "engagement ceremony" with the background of Sanskrit mantras chanted by the Hindu priests.</p> <p>During the Nichayathartham the lagnapatrikai (marriage invitation) is read out in Tamil. The invitation is mainly from bridegroom's father counter signed by the bride's father. The invitation gives the following details of both the bride and the groom read out to everyone present there. Personal information like: Father's name, Grand father's name, the village to which their forefathers belonged, their gothra, alias name etc.</p> <p>Sari worn by the bride depicting the elements like flowers, depicting the god etc., and sari made with vibrant colors</p>
Onam Sari	Hindu	<p>Onam is a festival celebrated by the people of Kerala, The festival commemorates the Vamana avatar of Vishnu and the subsequent home coming of the legendary Emperor Mahabali. During this period girl/women wear a lustrous silk sari with golden borders depicting onam festive elements.</p>
Pongal Sari	Hindu	<p>Pongal is a thanks giving festival at the end of harvest season and also celebrated as Harvest festival by the people of Tamil Nadu. The sari which are made for this festive depicting the pongal pot, karumbu etc.,</p>
Ramzan Sari	Muslim	<p>Ramazan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar Muslims worldwide observe this as a month of fasting. This annual observance is regarded as one of the Five Pillars of Islam. The month lasts 29–30 days based on the visual sightings of the crescent moon, according to numerous biographical accounts compiled in hadiths.</p> <p>Sari which is worn by the muslim women depicting the elements like moon etc.,</p>
Reception Sari	Hindu	<p>A wedding reception is held after the completion of a marriage ceremony. This is a time a women wears a costly sari for the function. Depicting the vibrant colors and patterns, sometimes the bride order a customized sari from the retail manufacturer</p>
Ugadi Sari	Hindu	<p>Ugadi is a function which marks the first day of the new year based on Hindu Calendar. Sari for this festive depicting the elements like mango, banana, flowers etc.,</p>

Table :3 continued

From the above table shows the different types of sari which are portraying a girl /women for a specific occasion to enhance the religion value of their own community.

6. Market Mantras by the Sari Retailers

Today's scenario all the retailers needs to increase their sales volume in a short period of time for that they develop a market strategies by the various ways to increase the sales. In the initial period of time a normal sari which depicts a regular design elements are worn by a women for all the festive days. After some time, retailers developed a market strategy for a sari according to the festive occasion in the year of 1990s. After that slowly they adapted a fashion trends in to the sari by the large scale retailers. Ex : Pocket sari, Two in One sari etc., in the year 2000.

The current trend in the sari industry depicts the character and physical features of girl/women. These inventive ideas are done by the major silk sari retailers in Tamilnadu, India. Ex : Pothys, Nalli Silks, RMKV Silks etc., A store called Kumaran Silks, Chennai derived the sari for each zodiac sign depicting the character of a girl/women in terms of colors and design elements. These type of inventive ideas helps to increase the sale among the normal customer. These kind of market mantras by the sari retailers formulaised a separate brand names for their own product label. The below table shows the recent customised brands in the silk sari :-

Table : 4

S.NO	BRANDS IN SILK SARI	RETAILERS WHO INVENTED
1.	Samudrika Pattu	Pothys Chennai RMKV Chennai
2.	Mayuri Menpattu	
3	Navarathna Pattu	
4.	Parampara Pattu	
5	Vastrakala Pattu	
6	Vasundhra Pattu	

7. Brands in Silk Sari

The mentioned above silk sari brands are explained below with the proper definition and pictures:-

7.1 Samudrika Pattu

A beautiful woman is the epitome of the perfect creation, in other words she is endowed with “Samudrika Lakshanam” according to vedas. Sari designers and weavers have achieved in capturing such admirable physical characteristics of women in Kanchipuram sari and have christened this creation as “Samudrika Pattu – Sarva Lakshana Pattu. The picture which is mentioned here depicts a facial appearance of women in samudrika lakshanamin terms of the facial elements such as Head, Eye Brow, Eye, Nose Mouth, Lips Tooth, Head, Hair and Cheeks.

7.2 Mayuri Menpattu

Meaning of mayuri menpattu silk denotes a female peacock. The centre of attraction with this ethnic pure silk light weight kanchipuram exotically decorated with a hand woven pallu.

7.3 Navarathna Pattu

Silk sari collection has different materials comes in a wide range of designs, colour combinations, patterns and jari work. The sari collection is available for girls/ women between 12 – 22 years. This collection carries designs and patterns ranging from checks, stripes, buttas and plain silk fabrics. The accompanying jari border work is creative and beautiful complementing the whole creation.

7.4 Vastrakala Pattu

Vastrakala Pattu combines the grandeur and richness of Kanchipuram silk with the intricate an extensive hand embroidery work of North India together weavers create an enchanting blend of North and South to give a perfect sari which will make a feel special in any social gathering. These sari are greatly preferred by modern young women to look them best. The price range of these sari is between Rs.10,000 to Rs.2,00,000

7.5 Vasundhra Pattu

Word Vasundhra describes “possessor of wealth” in Sanskrit in another term Vasundhara means independent women who don't appreciate restriction. They enjoy tasting life's pleasures, adventure and discovery. They need to feel passionately about something, and when their enthusiasm is aroused they can be hyperactive and overexcited. But when they are demotivated they can just as easily be disenchanted, indolent or even downright lazy. Understanding these criteria's retailers made a latest collection of vasundhra pattu. Being the center of attraction these budget sari ranges between Rs.3500 to Rs.5000, The material is hand woven, the zari is half fine & made of pure silk with silk mark tag. This light weight pure silk sari suits for any type of occasion. “Vasundhra Pattu – Ellorukkum Pattu”

7.6 Parampara Pattu

The word **Parampara** is the knowledge that is passed in succession from teacher to student. It is a Sanskrit word that denotes the principle of transmitting knowledge in its most valuable form knowledge based on direct and practical experience. “Parampara Pattu” a new collection of Kanchipuram Pattu sari that recreate and opulence of traditional value of design elements to a teacher in the design, pattern, color and weave. Parampara sari are uniquely woven with Uppada Jacquard work on Kanchi pattu giving its gloriously traditional feel and a contemporary outlook.

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8. Customer Needs for the Future Sari

Current scenario in Southern India, women are adopting the fashion trends in their regular wardrobes, but when comes to sari they won't adapt the fashion trends easier than regular wardrobes, but still they are looking for a new visual tactics in a sari, every year in seasonal collection from the retailers, sometimes women may relate the seasonal color trends into sari or the new material interpretation in the sari embellishments

There are many buying factors which are influenced from the customer point of views:-

1. Adoption of global design elements in their sari such as motifs, color, repeats etc., but not losing the traditional value of the product.
2. People prefers fantasized brand name for a sari to show their taste of royal feel.
3. Sari which are made from a regular Indian silk into export silk like Japanese Silk, range from Rs.50,000/- to Rs.2,00,000/-. Women who belong to the upper middle class prefer to buy than a Indian silk to Japanese silk because of heavy luster and shine
4. The basic ornamentation material in a silk sari is gold zari, these materials majorly consumes the price of the sari. Instead of these, the retailers tried with various other embellishment materials such as lurex, glass, stone, shells, etc., using these materials the aesthetic feel of the sari defers than a regular silk sari. Most of the women prefer these sari types as an occasional wear.
5. A regular sari has 4-6 yards of length, few women are not comfortable to wear these lengthy sari, sometimes women prefers light weight sari, Manufactures and retailers tried various denier of silk filaments in the sari
6. A normal silk sari can't be washed, instead of that manufactures and retailers tried with Artificial silk in the silk sari weaving called as “Silk Like Polyester” for the comfortable washing and to reduce the price of the sari

9. New Ideas from the Sari Retailer

Apart from the above customer view points from the retailers are also tried with various inventive ideas in terms of the materials, color, design etc.,

1. Retailers tried a new inventive sale ideas called as “Designer Sari” it means the sari is designed from a very famous known designer in the local community after that it is woven from a master weavers. When the sari comes to sales in the showroom retailers keeps the designer as a brand to the sari. These will easily attract the customer at time of sale.
2. Generally sari is worn by a girl from the age of 14 onwards. But few of the parents are interested to wear a sari to their kids from the age of 5 onwards. In this age, it is very difficult to drape and wear it. Considering the above sales critique retailers invented a Sari called as “Kutty Sari” for the girl kids with a minimum yard length and less weight
3. Sometimes retailers won't keep the same brand name for their sari, they adopted few crafts in terms of weaving techniques, material, embellishment as a brand name in the retail industry few brand name as follows:-

Table : 5

1.	Craft Adoption	Pochampalli Sari	Sari which are made from a place called pochampalli. Weavers are in this place use the cotton yarn in a specific count and construction methods. This technique name has been promoted as a brand name in the recent retail industry and customers also satisfied with these brand name in their sari
2.	Material Adoption	Tussar Sari	Sari made from tussar silk is known as Tussar Sari. After some time it become a brand name from the retailers to the customer
3.	Embellishment Adoption	Party Sari	Sari which are ornamented with various materials such as mirror, stone, tassels, laces etc., are called Embroidered sari or party sari. After a long period this will become a brand name
4	Technique Adoption	Reversible Sari/ 2 in 1 Sari	Sari which is made on the double cloth principle called as Reversible sari, ie. Sari has a different design in front and back

9. Conclusion

Whatever the brand names are adopted or followed by the retailers to the customers, a retailer can't miss use or fake the brand names in their sari. A few large scale retailers have a separate marketing or sales team to increase the sales volume of the business in terms of advertisement and promotion. Sometimes these teams do a research in weaving clusters in terms of weave techniques and materials newly incorporated in the loom. These parameters are increasing the retailers to adapt or set new trends in silk sari retail industry and promoting a new craft to the market and consumer. For product awareness retailers prefers a common public media such as newspaper, television ads and exhibition to the new product promotion.

When a new trend has accepted by customers, then all the retailers will follow the same brand names to their product or with a slightly incorporated with a new change in the product to add on higher price in the sari. But few small scale retailers easily incorporate brand name to the regular sari in their label and product packages. These sari prices are very less when compared with the large scale retailers, these retailers also promote these products in the media, because of these promotion consumer will confuse between the original and the fake sari product. Few people adapts to the small scale retailer because they sell the fake silk or cluster based sari in a lesser price using various synthetic materials.

Because of this reasons, the originality of the craft, technique and the product value is gone from the market status. To avoid this the who ever invented a new brand in the market, they should create a complete video of how a new craft is applied in the product and how its manufactured or they should shoot a short video advertisement to understand the originality of the product in the market instead of a regular advertisement. These kind of advertisements helps the customer to know about the product completely and how to identify the original product with a fake one. It can also be uploaded in common video web portals like youtube, metashare and dailymotion etc., to reach the customized knowledge easily to the customer.

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The Iconic Dutch Woman

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Abstract

In recent years the media reported on a new iconic Dutch woman: the King Louie woman. Wearing in a jersey dress with vividly coloured floral designs from the Dutch brand King Louie, combined with leggings and Birkenstock sandals, sturdy boots or Swedish Hasbeens clogs on her feet, she brings her children to school in a 'bakfiets' (a carrier tricycle).

Interestingly, the King Louie woman is not your usual celebrity 'style icon' in the sense that she is a role model that expresses the fashion zeitgeist and inspires mainstream women to dress alike, such as Jacky Kennedy Onassis or Madonna. The King Louie woman is by contrast presented as the personification of the Dutch national character; a Dutch national icon.

This is highly surprising, because whereas fashion is undisputedly the main feature of the icon of the Parisienne, the Dutch woman is traditionally characterised by her lack of fashion sense. Characterising her through fashionable jersey dresses seems like a radical break with Dutch tradition.

In this paper, however, I will state the claim that this is not the case, and that the King Louie woman is instead firmly rooted in Dutch culture. Instead of signalling a break with the past, the King Louie woman can be seen as a direct continuation of the prevalent Dutch fashion narrative and of a distinct Dutch dress tradition. This case thus shows that age-old Dutch cultural icons are preserved through a contemporary fashion phenomenon.

1. Introduction

Within North American imaginary the iconic Dutch boy is probably Hans Brinker, the main character from Mary Mapes Dodge novel. Or alternatively, the boy that saved the Netherlands from flooding by putting his finger in a leaking dike, who appears in a short-within-a-story in the same publication (1865). Surprisingly, these boys are complete strangers to the Dutch themselves as these fictional characters are part of American rather than Dutch folklore. When we look at the book covers of the many editions that have been published since 1865, however, the Dutch will recognize the girl that is usually displayed next to Hans Brinker as the iconic Dutch woman. She can be recognised by her blonde hair, blue eyes, a rosy complexion and a characteristic white cap on her head and wooden shoes on her feet. This iconic Dutch woman owes her current reputation mostly to advertising and tourism. She is for example used to promote Dutch products like cheese, tulips, liquor and fish (Image 1). Regarding tourism, a popular activity is having your picture taken donned up in a costume of the same kind (Image 2) (Eipers 2009, Rooijackers 1998).

While her outfit looks authentic to an untrained eye, often it is a very free interpretation of the traditional Volendammer dress, which is a fishing village near Amsterdam. It is important to note here that, although the Volendammer style dress has taken central stage in the cultural imagination from 1900 onwards (Grever 2004, Rooijackers 1998), the Dutch do not have one official style of national dress. On the contrary, Dutch dress culture is characterised by the country's regional diversity: every community has or had its own style of dress. This sounds like a contradiction in terms – a national dress that is not national – but ever since the eighteenth century it is this diversity that has been seen as an overriding characteristic of Dutch identity (Koolhaas, 2010). Regional dress thus plays a double role: it is a symbol of local culture, while at the same time it has become a symbol of national culture and national unity, especially during the late nineteenth century (De Jong 2001: 157 & 2007: 328). As a result, for the Dutch themselves iconic images of 'the girl from Zeeland' from the south-west of the Netherlands, or 'the woman from Friesland' from the North of the Netherlands can therefore just as easily function as a regional or a national icon (Image 5 and 6).

Keywords: National Icon, National Identity, National Dress, Dutch Fashion, King Louie Woman

This being said, the woman dressed in a white cap and clogs has become the most widely known iconic Dutch woman in the Netherlands as well as abroad. Dressed in her fantasy costume she has become a standardised image of (historical) reality. Following the semiotician C.S. Peirce, she can not only be seen as an icon, i.e. a sign, which refers to what it depicts, but also a symbol, i.e. a sign that does not refer to what it depicts as it is a standardised image of something abstract, in this case Dutch national identity (Frijhoff 1998: 52, Grever 2004: 210-211).

In this paper I will focus on the iconic woman's role as an expression of national identity within the context of contemporary Dutch fashion through the phenomenon of the *King Louie woman*.

2. The King Louie woman

Recently, a new iconic woman stood up in the Dutch media: the King Louie woman. Wearing a jersey dress with vividly coloured floral designs from the Dutch brand King Louie, combined with leggings and Birkenstock sandals, Swedish Hasbeens clogs by the Swedish firm Hasbeen or sturdy boots on her feet, she brings her children to school in a 'bakfiets' (a carrier tricycle).

This phenomenon was described as a typical Dutch style by both the national newspaper *de Volkskrant* and newsmagazine *Vrij Nederland* (Willems 2011 & Leclair 2010). And although another leading newsmagazine, *HP de Tijd*, does not refer to King Louie in their feature article of August 2012 on 'the Dutch woman', its cover unmistakably displays a King Louie woman. She is portrayed on a bicycle, in a typical Dutch Polder landscape, a child's saddle on the back, tulips and a carton of milk in her saddlebags and a shopping bag of the Netherlands' biggest supermarket chain on her handlebars. This 'true' Dutch woman wears a stereotypical Dutch white cap on her head, like the ones worn by the national icon of the Volendammer girl, here not combined with the traditional dress, but with Swedish clogs, leggings, a jeans jacket and – here it is – a jersey top and skirt with a floral design (Image 3).

By the same token we see an illustration of a paper doll on the cover of *Poldermodel: the Dutch Women is Unique*, a book on the characteristics of Dutch women. And the doll's dress is without a doubt one by King Louie. (Image 4) (Kramer 2011).

The phenomenon King Louie woman, was even discussed as 'word of the day' on *taalbank.nl*, a weblog by the head editor of the Netherlands' most renowned dictionary: the *Dikke Van Dale* (Den Boon 2010).

These examples demonstrate that in contemporary Dutch media a narrative on a supposed iconic Dutch woman exists and that she is characterised through her clothing style. Also, it shows that the narrative on the iconic Dutch woman is currently being reconstructed. The expression of the Dutch national character is no longer solely reserved for the traditional Volendammer girl; nowadays she is assisted by the King Louie woman.

In this paper I will analyse the phenomenon of the King Louie woman and argue that she can be regarded as a contemporary reconstruction of the iconic Dutch woman.

First, I will expound my theoretical framework and explain how something so 'serious' as national identity can be expressed by something as 'frivolous' as fashion.

Second, I will analyse the King Louie woman and place both the ideological and aesthetic dimensions of this phenomenon in a historical context through a comparison with ideas on a typical Dutch fashion mentality and traditional Dutch dress.

3. National identity and fashion

The question of what a national identity is and how it is represented is heavily debated among scholars. A complete overview of the current discussions would carry too far within the boundaries set for this paper. Therefore, I will limit myself to a short discussion of the main theoretical concepts that underlie my analysis.

The first theoretical concept is that of banal nationalism, a concept coined by Michael Billig in 1995. The buttressing of the construct of national identity is usually associated with grand gestures, like national

holidays, national monuments and political campaigns. Banal nationalism, however, refers to a more everyday way of being reminded of nation and nationality, e.g. through images on money and stamps. These reminders are so familiar that they are processed unconsciously and unnoticed (Billig 1995: 8).

Fashion theorist Alice Goodrum observes that fashion also plays an important role in this everyday buttressing of national identity. She has applied the concept of banal nationalism to British fashion discourse and analysed how ideas on nationhood and national identity are sustained through fashion on a daily basis. It is reproduced and commodified not only through brand stories and iconographies, but also through the textual and visual rhetoric of fashion magazines (Goodrum 2005: 62). Goodrum's use of the concept of banal nationalism with regard to fashion opens up the possibility to understand the King Louie woman as an icon of Dutch national identity.

The second theoretical concept that forms the base for my exploration is that of a national fashion identity. Fashion theorist Jennifer Craik defines this concept as follows: "a national sense of fashion or style is the expressive encapsulation of the cultural psyche or zeitgeist of a place through its people. This occurs when three realms coalesce: aesthetics, cultural practice and cultural articulation." (Craik 2002: 460). The first dimension, aesthetics, refers to the way in which clothing styles are distinctive from one another. Craik names for example the preference for certain motifs, types of clothing, cuts and materials. Along with a distinguishing way of combining pieces of clothing, or what she calls composition. The second dimension is cultural practice and refers to the practice of dressing. Or, in other words, a certain clothing behaviour, that is typical for a specific location. The third dimension, cultural articulation, is the naturalisation of ideas concerning national identity and fashion. A specific style is then seen as the 'natural' identity of a nation: when "internal and external perceptions of the essence of national stylistic identity overlap" (Craik 2009: 414).

Following Craik's three dimensions, I will analyse the King Louie woman and argue that she can be seen as a contemporary counterpart of the iconic Dutch women. With this I mean that – just like the historical iconic Dutch women – she is not only an icon (i.e. a standardised image of reality), but also a symbol of Dutch national fashion identity (i.e. a standardised image of something abstract).

4. The King Louie woman: an expression of Dutch (fashion) identity?

4.1 Aesthetic dimension

In 1981 George Cramer and Ann Berlips started selling second hand clothing on the Noordermarkt in Amsterdam. Fed up by the mass production and brand mindedness of the era, they specialised in dresses from the 50s, mainly with flower patterns (LeClaire 2010). From 1985 onwards they started to produce their own designs under the brand name King Louie (Boonstra 2010). Especially since around 2000 they have created a furore with their jersey skirts and dresses. At first these were all in bright, but solid colours. Until around 2004, when a suitable textile printer was found and ever since vividly coloured prints have become the trademark of King Louie (Van Rossum 2010).

The brand has a very distinct and recognizable aesthetic, characterised by flower patterns in vivid colours. They produce coats, jackets, trousers, tops, knitwear, skirts and dresses. In the following I will however focus on the last two items, as these play a central role in the image of the King Louie woman.

Every collection consists of around six models, which are made in a gradually growing number of patterns. Currently there are thirty different prints, each executed in three different colours (Boonstra 2010a & b, Van Rossum 2010).

The dresses and skirts are made of stretch jersey, knee long and always have a slight retro feeling. The neckline and sleeves determine the variation. Sometimes new models are introduced or regular models are slightly updated, but over all the models remain the same for every collection. The cut and material of the King Louie dresses and skirts are then quite constant and thus recognizable.

Although the prints are renewed every season, the same can be said for them. The large number of patterns in every collection can roughly be divided into three main categories: flowers, animals and graphic patterns.

Of the thirty prints that are currently in the collection the animal and graphic patterns account for 1/3 of the designs, the remaining 2/3 are all flowers (Interview 2012) (Image 7).

Most items thus contain flower prints and therefore it is not surprising that these are seen as the archetypal King Louie prints (e.g. Couwer & Lampe 2005, Boonstra 2010a & b).

So while the patterns change seasonally, the systematic use of flowers and colours keeps the pieces recognizable. As a matter of fact, regular customers can date the models by their patterns and certain 'classics' are actively sought after in second hand (web)shops (Interview 2012).

The distinctive style of the King Louie woman is not only determined by the motifs (flowers), types of garments (dresses and skirts), cut (slightly retro inspired), materials (jersey) and colours (bright). According to the media – and my own observations – she also displays a distinguishing way of combining them, or in Craik's words: she has a certain *composition*. While the King Louie dresses or skirts forms the basis, these are to be worn in combination with specific other pieces of clothing or footwear to form 'the King Louie woman uniform'.

Essential are her shoes. During summer the favourite footwear of the King Louie woman are Swedish Hasbeens clogs or sandals by Birkenstock or Dr Scholl. During the winter months she covers her legs with leggings, her arms with a cardigan and opts for sturdy flat boots (Leclaire 2010, Van Rossum 2010). Her hairstyle is also typical: not impeccably groomed, but slightly messy, often with an artificial flower behind her ear (Kramer 2011: 25, Brandt Cortius 22 juni 2011).

The distinct and clearly recognizable aesthetic of the King Louie women becomes clear by the photo *Déjeuner sur L'Herbe* (2010). This image is part of the Exactitudes series by photographers Arie Versluis and Ellie Uyttenbroek. Inspired by the dress codes of social groups, they have been systematically documenting these groups since 1994. They approach people from a certain social group on the street and ask them to come to their studio at a later moment, but in the exact same clothes they are wearing at the time of the invitation. They portrayed their models against a white backdrop, in similar poses. Through placing these photos next to each other in a raster like composition, the tension between individuality and uniformity becomes clear. (<http://www.exactitudes.com/index.php?/series/detail/126>).

Although these women are wearing different models and prints and we do not know whether they are actually by King Louie or similar dresses or skirts by other brands. The dresses overrule the diversity in designs and physical characteristics such as hair, eye and skin colour, and an archetypal type of woman comes to the fore.

The photo collage also shows us that, while this phenomenon is often referred to as "the King Louie woman", in reality the actual brand of her dress is not key. It is not surprising then that at another Dutch brand, *Sissy Boy*, flowered jersey dresses are also the bestsellers (Van Rossum 2010).

4.2 Cultural practice

In the above I have shown that the King Louie woman has a distinct aesthetic dimension. This dimension is characterised by a certain use of materials, cut and colours in combination with a typical *composition*. Thus, this is Craik's first dimension of a national fashion identity. In this paragraph I will argue that the King Louie woman phenomenon also displays the second dimension: *cultural practice*. This refers to a certain clothing behaviour, which is regarded typical for a specific location.

In the media the clothing behaviour of this iconic woman is seen as typical for the Netherlands and more specific for the Randstad (the urban agglomeration of Western Holland) (Le Claire 2010, VanRossum 2010 & 2011, Kramer 2011: 25, Slütter 2012).

In an article in the magazine of the Dutch cycling association the main character of the Dutch movie *Richting West* (Going West) (2010) is described as 'a Dutch woman pur sang'. This statement is accompanied with a film still of the main character cycling: a grocery bag on her handlebars, her son in a child's saddle on the back of her bike and dressed in a jersey dress with a flower print (Slütter 2012). While this article does not use the term King Louie woman, the national newspaper NRC does apply this title to the

main character in their review of the movie (Linssen 2010): a ‘Dutch woman pur sang’ is thus put on a par with the King Louie woman.

Milou van Rossum, a renowned Dutch fashion journalist, sees the King Louie as a ‘typical Dutch style’, which is popular all over the country. Particularly, among 30-something year old mothers from Amsterdam (Van Rossum 2010 & 2011).

Annemiek LeClaire describes the original King Louie woman as “urban, highly-educated and progressive”. And like Van Rossum, she states that the King Louie woman is mainly found in the Randstad, but that the style is also popular in the bigger provincial towns (LeClaire 2010).

For her book *Poldermodels: the Dutch Woman is Unique – a book on the characteristics of Dutch women* (2011), Santje Kramer interviewed foreigners living in the Netherlands on their view on Dutch women. Several of the interviewees name the women in flowered jersey dresses and one gives quite a specific description: “The Randstad woman preferably clothes herself in a flowered dress by King Louie. She wants to be a woman, but still rather a girl. She is proud on her long, somewhat messy hair which hardly ever sees a comb.” (Kramer 2011: 25).

These articles show how the clothing behaviour is seen as something that is typical for the Netherlands and especially the Randstad. The King Louie woman phenomenon then cannot only be ascribed an *aesthetic dimension*, but also a distinct *cultural practice*.

The King Louie woman is thus not necessarily found all over the Netherlands, and therefore could be understood as solely a regional icon. Nonetheless, she is also regarded as a national icon. Just like the historical iconic Dutch woman she expresses both regional and national identity. In my view this duality is made possible by the unique double role regional dress plays in the Netherlands.

4.3 Cultural articulation

In the above I have argued that the King Louie woman has a distinct aesthetic and is also seen as a type of clothing behaviour that is typical for the Netherlands. The phenomenon thus meets the demands for the first two dimensions of Craik’s national fashion identity. In this paragraph I will zoom in on the third dimension: *cultural articulation*.

While a recognizable aesthetic and a connection to a certain location (nation) are essential for a national fashion identity, these ideas also have to be naturalised. According to Craik this is the case when “internal and external perceptions of the essence of national stylistic identity overlap”. Or in other words, the style has to be understood and described as an expression of the national character.

Interestingly, the brand King Louie itself does not brand itself as ‘typically Dutch’ via advertising or by other means. As a matter of fact, they do not advertise at all. Owner George Cramer explains their marketing philosophy as follows: “We do not advertise as a matter of principle. We want others to tell that our products are desirable, we do not do this ourselves.” (Boonstra 2010a).

The ‘Dutchness’ of the King Louie woman is thus not a product of marketing. Hence, the reproduction and commodification of Dutch national identity does not take place through brand stories and iconographies.

The King Louie dresses and skirts thus gain their ‘national’ meaning through the textual and visual rhetoric of (fashion) magazines, newspapers, movies and websites.

The clothing is frequently lent to stylist for commercials, TV-series and photo-shoots. Cramer and Berlips explicitly endorse this as they see it as ‘free advertising’ (Boonstra 2010b).

For this paper I was lucky enough to be able to conduct an interview with the store manager of *Exota*, one of the two shops owned by Cramer and Berlips¹ and study their collected press cuttings. Leafing through the brand’s newspaper and magazine clippings file from the period 2000 – 2012, several characteristics are

¹ Cramer and Berlips own two stores in Amsterdam where they sell King Louie, Petit Louie and other brands. Most of the dresses are sold via wholesale in boutiques throughout the Netherlands (and abroad). Since 2010, Cramer and Berlips also run an online store.

mentioned repeatedly. Renowned Dutch women's magazines like *Margriet*, *Libelle*, *Flair*, *Viva Baby* and *Kek Mama* often depict the models wearing King Louie dresses as young mothers. Another reoccurring element is an emphasis on the functionality and practicability of the clothing, for example for yoga (Living, februari 2005) and for conquering the Dutch autumn weather, when travelling by bicycle (Viva Baby, 2005).

This emphasis on the functional and practical properties of jersey dresses is a central element in the discussions on the King Louie woman (e.g. Willems 2011, Leclaire 2010, Kramer 2011). In the newsmagazine *Vrij Nederland* we read for example:

[A King Louie dress] is easy to wash, it does not need ironing, has a comfortable fit, is suitable to wear while cycling, the skirt length is appropriate for 'work and pleasure', the soft fabric is forgiving for a mother's body and it is affordable. (Leclaire 2010: 84)

This preference for practical clothing is also recognized by Santje Kramer and her interviewees (i.e. expats living in the Netherlands). They see it as a common characteristic of Dutch women and relate it to the popularity of jeans, but also of jersey dresses. One of the interviewees for example puts it as follows:

(...) Jersey dresses, with a little too tight fit around the belly, are a favourite with many [Dutch women] But considering that everyone cycles, such a dress beats formal clothing which make it difficult to move (Kramers 2011:25)

Kramer whole-heartedly agrees with this idea, as she herself finds nothing as bothersome as "cycling with dresses blown up by the wind and pencil skirts, which have to be hiked up to your belly button to be able to reach the pedals" (Kramers 2011: 25).

Functionality and practicality are thus considered key characteristics for the popularity of these dresses on the Dutch market. For my line of reasoning, it is important to note here that these characteristics fit seamlessly into Dutch fashion discourse. Through their textual and visual rhetoric, Dutch fashion and women's magazines (re)construct a narrative on Dutch fashion mentality. As I have shown elsewhere, this mentality is characterised by a negative attitude towards ostentation, while validating the characteristics of soberness, functionality and rationality (Feitsma 2012a).

A dress that is as versatile (for work and spare time), functional (for cycling), affordable and easy in maintenance as the King Louie dress indeed adheres to the Dutch fashion mentality. Although the King Louie dresses and the King Louie woman are 21st century phenomena, the media's focus on functionality roots them in age-old ideas on a Dutch fashion mentality. This explains how a recent fashion trend can be regarded as an expression of Dutch identity and the King Louie woman as a Dutch icon.

5. Dutch fashion aesthetic

The above quotes show how the King Louie woman is not only seen as a distinct style, related to a certain location, but also as the expression of the Dutch national character. And thus it meets all three dimensions of national fashion identity.

Interestingly enough, while the functionality is in line with the prevalent fashion narrative, the vivid colours of King Louie dresses clash with this view. For it sees itself as characterised by sober hues, black and white (Feitsma, 2012b).

In my view however, the King Louie woman cannot only be considered as typically Dutch because of her fashion mentality. Also the aesthetic of the clothing can be connected to Dutch dress tradition.

As I have shown in my paper *Colour me Drab? Colours in Dutch Regional Wear and Fashion*, there is an alternative narrative that links Dutch fashion identity to vivid colours and multi-coloured flower patterns and sees them as the ultimate expression of Dutch fashion identity (Feitsma 2012b).

The stereotypical image of a 'colourless' Dutch fashion finds its origins in the clothing of the Dutch regents, who wore conservative black clothes in combination with crisp white-linen trimmings. This is an image that has been made famous by Dutch paintings by the likes of Rembrandt van Rijn, Frans Hals and Ferdinand Bol.

Yet, when we look back not to the dress of the Dutch elite, but to that of the working class (i.e. the farmers, fishermen and craftsmen), we see a completely different image. Traditional Dutch dress is namely characterized by an inclination for bold colours and flower patterns, especially Indian chintz. Since the seventeenth century Indian chintz was imported by the Dutch East India Company from India and soon became highly fashionable, first with the elite and soon after with farmers, fishermen and craftsmen

It was favoured a result of its lightness and pliability and because it was relatively cheap, colourfast and dirt-repellent. Its colourfulness and the patterns, however, were also important reasons for its popularity. After 1770 chintz went out of fashion, but remained a standard element of Dutch traditional dress (Arts 2010: 50-53). While originally an exotic textile, it was soon adapted, and is nowadays seen as an icon of Dutch identity, much like the white and blue Delft earthenware, which is based on Chinese porcelain.

Colourful clothing does not only continue a Dutch dress tradition, but are also strongly related to ideas about Dutch identity. Around 1800, Dutch folk culture was thought to express the highest level of Dutchness. As the Dutch cultural-historian Eveline Koolhaas-Grosfeld demonstrated (2010), this view was based on the ideological belief that Dutch folk culture showed an unbroken continuity with the culture of the Batavians, the ancient tribe from which the Dutch supposedly descend. Within this myth, the Batavians were considered to have a preference for colourful clothing; a preference that was thought to be still alive within Dutch regional codes of dressing from around 1800.

As a result of the gradual replacement of the Batavian myth with the myth about the Dutch Golden age (the seventeenth century), Dutch national fashion identity became associated with the sober black and white clothing worn by the Dutch regents. At the same time, a gradual turn towards a more subdued colour palette in traditional dress after 1880, as well as vogue for black in international fashion and a more and more negative view on Dutch folk culture – this narrative was forgotten and as a result nowadays bright clothing in multi-coloured flower patterns are no longer seen as typically Dutch.

In spite of the fact that contemporary brands like King Louie have brought a vivid palette and flowered patterns back into Dutch fashion, the prevalent narrative of a Dutch 'colourless' fashion style did not change. As a result Dutch brands that are characterised by the use of bright colours are thought to be exceptional. However, when we place the clothing of the King Louie women in a historical perspective her aesthetics fit into Dutch dress tradition as well as into a historical narrative on Dutch national identity.

Conclusion

In this paper I have argued that the King Louie woman can be regarded as an iconic Dutch woman, much like historical icon of the blonde haired, blue eyed and rosy-cheeked woman wearing a white cap and clogs, because she is also seen as the expression of Dutch national identity.

By analysing the phenomenon following Craik's three dimensions of a national fashion identity, I have shown that in the King Louie woman these dimensions come together.

Firstly, she has a distinct and recognizable aesthetic, characterised specific motifs (flowers), types of clothing (dresses and skirts), cut (knee long), materials (jersey) and colours (bright). Along with a distinct way of combining them with clogs, sandals or sturdy boots, leggings, cardigans and a slightly messy hairstyle.

Secondly, I demonstrated that the media describes the dress behaviour of the King Louie woman as 'typically Dutch'. Thus locating it in the Netherlands. Although, it is also seen as a clothing behaviour that is characteristic for a certain region of the Netherlands (the Randstad), the traditional double role of regional costume allows the King Louie dress to express national identity as well as regional identity. Thus, a case of 'pars pro toto'.

Lastly, I have shown that the media's focus on the functional and practical features of the King Louie style, roots it in an age-old narrative on a distinct Dutch attitude towards fashion. Or in other words, the King Louie woman is seen as an expression of the Dutch national character. Although, the bright colours of the dresses clash with this prevalent narrative, because it sees itself as characterised by sober colours, black and white, I have argued that this is not necessarily a reason to see this as 'unDutch'. For, the vivid flower

patterns fit in well with Dutch traditional dress. As well as in an alternative and forgotten narrative which sees a preference for colourful clothing as 'truly Dutch'.

The above has shown that the King Louie woman is portrayed in the media as an expression of Dutch national (fashion) identity. Furthermore it demonstrated that through the media she has become a standardised image of reality (a certain type of Dutch women dressed in jersey dresses), as well as a standardised image of something abstract (Dutch identity). This is what makes her – just like historical iconic Dutch woman – a symbol as well as an icon.

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Pop Art- Indian Lifestyle Industry's take on the Iconic trend

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to investigate the influence that Iconic Pop art movement has on the design aesthetics of the present age artists & designer labels in fashion and lifestyle industry in India. The paper will also study the birth, death, revival, its trickle down to India and finally how it has intertwined into the commercial circuits of the fashion and lifestyle industry in India.

Design/Methodology/Approach – Research conducted is exploratory in nature. In-Depth interviews conducted with few Indian artist and owner of labels providing with contemporary pop art on fashion and lifestyle products to understand their Ideology and business system. Study on consumers with the help interviews to identify awareness of pop art & Pop art inspired products. Secondary research to understand the iconic pop art movement of 60's & 70's borrowing literature from books and scholarly research papers that elucidate Pop art movements.

Findings – It has been found that while pop art was a rage in Western countries during 60's and 70's majorly due to Andy Warhol, it had almost no impact on the Indian society. However with the liberalization and international exposure there is curiosity in Generation X in India for such products that express their lifestyle and personality. There exists an evolved contemporary version of pop art in the Indian Fashion and lifestyle industry today which is growing immensely.

Research Limitations/Implications – Any secondary research into the Indian Pop art movement is restricted by the lack of literature and documentation on it. This has limited answering questions of how/when/where/who/what about the origins and growth of Pop art in India

Originality/Value – The study provides with the historical context for contemporary Pop art in the fashion and lifestyle industry in India.

1. Introduction

Art is either Plagiarism or revolution.

-Paul Gauguin, painter

Art is much less important than life, but what a poor life without it."

-Robert Motherwell, artist

Art is generally understood as any activity or product done by people with a communicative or aesthetic purpose—something that expresses an idea, an emotion or, more generally, a world view. (Maraviglia, 2010)

The very notion of art continues today to stir controversy, whether it can be defined has also been a matter of controversy being so open to multiple interpretations as the concept itself has changed over centuries. (Adajian, 2007) For century's painters, artists, writers, art collectors and other prominent figures in society have defined and redefined art, the very definition still continues to transform to give a new significance, a new definition. (Maraviglia, 2010)

Today, art is an evolving and global concept, open to new interpretation, too fluid to be pinned down. (Maraviglia, 2010)



Mankiran Kaur Dhillon

Mankiran Kaur Dhillon, graduated as Bachelor in Commerce (Honours) with a major in Finance and Marketing from Delhi University, New Delhi, 2011 and is currently perusing Masters in Fashion Marketing from Pearl Academy, New Delhi. Mankiran is an Art enthusiast who loves to travel, is keen researcher of how Fashion and Art influence each other. She has worked for a pop culture inspired brand, Quirk Box under artist Jayesh Sachdev and Rixi Bhatia. She has put together a 2-day stall for Quirk Box, for which she had done promotions and visual merchandising work of the stall at Bacardi NH-7 Weekender in Delhi, October 2012. She has also worked under designer Manav Gangwani's company Infinite Luxury Boutique, for the launch of Roberto Cavalli Caffè in DLF Emporio, 2012, New Delhi.

Keywords: Pop Art, Fashion & Lifestyle, India, Artist, Designer Labels

2 Genesis- Pop Art

Jamie James(1996) explains the Birth of Pop Art in Book- Pop Art; In Romantic era artists based there art work on mundane concerns of everyday life like the farmers livestock and machines of industry ,considered proper subjects for Art. Marcel Duchamp in 1917, turned a porcelain urinal on its side and exhibited it as a sculpture, and two years later he painted a moustache on Mona Lisa, Dada was launched and it proved to be the most radical anti-art movement in history. Eventually Dada transformed into 'Surrealism' which for all its emphasis on psychosexuality and bizarre juxtapositions was nonetheless an art movement. The true anarchic strain of Dada could not resist itself again until the years after World War II when '**Pop Art**' emerged in Britain and United States.

Jamie James further explains in Pop Art (Book), 1996 that for British economy, it was gloomy era immediately after World War II. The enormous cost of rebuilding after the horrific destruction of the war, any sort of luxury, including colour printing, was looked down upon as unpatriotic. The arts in Britain post war period had a defiant drabness.

The United States on the other hand was booming. American magazines and films were big, colourful and glossy, in striking contrast to the essentially monochrome British ethos. (James, 1996)

In 1952, Edward Paolozzi, Richard Hamilton, Lawrence Alloway and a group of like minded young artists and critics, began to meet informally at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London. (Pop Art Movement) The Independent Group was formed who echoed Dadaism by challenging the notion that art had a claim to elevated status in society. (James, 1996) Independent group was established as an instigator into the British POP movement. (Massey, 1996)

The independent group's efforts culminated in 1956 in a landmark exhibition at the Whitechapel art gallery in London, prophetically called '**This is Tomorrow**'. The poster for exhibition was a small collage by Richard Hamilton called **Just What Is It That Makes Today's Home So Different So Appealing?** It also very significant as it prominently featured the word POP on the piece of candy held by the man. (See annexure 1) (James, 1996)

Paolozzi presented a number of collages assembled from magazine clippings and other "found objects", including his (now) celebrated collage entitled "*I was a Rich Man's Plaything*" which has the first ever appearance of word Pop, in the first meeting of the group.(See annexure 2) . (Pop Art Movement)

Term 'Pop art' is of British origin it was coined by Lawrence Alloway In 1955. Hamilton had given the movement an Image; Lawrence gave it its name. (Mahsun, 1989)

2.1 Pop Art

"Everything is beautiful. Pop is everything."

- Andy Warhol

"Pop is love, for it accepts everything. Pop is dropping the bomb. It's the American Dream Optimistic, generous and naïve."

-Robert Indiana

Warhol saying 'Everything is Pop' was expressing the feelings of a generation who felt their age was dawning, an age of "love" and "freedom. (Osterworld, 2003)

Pop Art is painting and sculptures which borrows its imagery from the mass culture –high art mimicking low art. Thus commercial products, advertisements, newspaper clippings, even comic books and pornography are fair game for Pop Artists who elevates these vulgar materials to the status of High brow culture. (James, 1996)

Pop not only rejected the subject matter of traditional art; it scorned its ethos. Pop art consolidated its formal properties; the explosive definition of culture as everything shrank to an iconography of signs and objects known from outside the field of art. (Mahsun, 1989)

2.2 60's and 70's

This was the period in America when icons from popular culture gained power in society that rivalled that of politicians and businessmen. Two most widely and influential Americans-

Elvis Presley and Mickey Mouse, both of whom later became celebrated subjects of paintings by Pop Artists Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein. (James, 1996)

Advertising caused a revolution in popular art field. It has become respectable in its own right. One of the traditional functions of fine art, the definition of what is fine and desirable for the ruling class, has now been taken over by the ad-man. (Smithson) Media and advertising are among the preferred contents of Pop art, which celebrate the consumer society in its own witty fashion. (Klaus & Grosenick, 2004)

In Sixties the consumers expressed a release from the conventions, values and consciousness of a culture that failed to anticipate the frustrations it was creating in the process of heightening the awareness of its increasingly sophisticated audience to change. (Tillim, 1965)

In 1960, the first painting in what was to become the classic Pop Art style began to emerge in New York. Andy Warhol produced paintings of the comic strip characters and a Coca Cola bottle. Later in 1962 Warhol produced his first painting with silkscreens, the technique which would dominate the rest of his career as a painter.

Warhol also began to make paintings featuring a serial use of appropriated images around the theme of death and disaster. Warhol's images included Electric Chair 1971, other horrific images of car crashes and the tragic death of the celebrity [Marilyn Monroe](#). (The 1960s and 1970s: Pop Art) (See annexure-3)

Roy Lichtenstein in his early period painted large number of paintings based upon war and action comic books. His *We Rose Up Slowly...*, (1964) gave the message of that shallow vision of love in romance comics is as valid as any other vision of love. (See Annexure-4)

In 1967 Peter Blake created one of the most enduring popular culture paintings, the cover of enormously influential Beatles album *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*. (James, 1996) (See Annexure-5)

3. India and Pop Art

In the late sixties, world art scene had taken a new shape. Pop art became big which lead gallery goers and art buyers in shock, for them pop was art in bad shape, it has an appearance of protest against the establishment. In India however, 'Religion' was dominant – the most insidious ideological pressure is exercised throughout the world, but more so in India, through religion. The Indian mass consciousness continues to be manipulated so that it may remain steeped in ignorance and feel disheartened and confused. (Purohit, 1988)

Chatanya, 1994 in book titled *History of Indian Painting* explains how a relaxed pictorial idiom has emerged, in many regions of India, which might show derivations from specific people's art or popular art of the region like Kalighat or Tanjore painting. The pictures have decorative intent and the juxtaposition of bright colours.

Bharat Khakhar had become the foremost exponent of modern Indian pop painting during the period of 1970-1980's. Khakhar admitted his love for calendar art, plastic flowers and neon displays. The fact that Pop art in the West is mostly identified with hording size paintings of soft drinks bottle and tomato soup tins, it is not pop. In west itself, POP has a much wider range. (Chatanya, 1994)

Indian art has always been dominated by pouncing Bengal tigers, regal jungle elephants, and Hindu gods and goddesses, these miniature masterpieces are worlds unto themselves, skilfully illustrated with a naive yet irresistible charm. (Dotz, 2007)

Dotz, 2007 in his book *Light of India*, also states about the magnificent collection of more than 300 vintage matchbox labels from India, dating from the turn of the century through the 1950s. Every design represents

the popular culture, religion, belief or even a product used nationwide as a print on the matchboxes. (See Annexure-6)(Dotz, 2007)

Many of Indian painting show the modern Indian pop art has many kinds of expressions and there are still more possibilities. (Chatanya, 1994)

3.1 Contemporary Indian POP

Indian Pop Art has defined Pop in its own terms of what's popular in India and is being taken forward by number of artists, fashion designers and upcoming labels, some of them being Jayesh Sachdev, Anupam Tomar, Manish Arora, Nida Mahmood, Pop goes the Art and House of Masaba respectively.

Sachdev, dubbed as India's Andy Warhol, the progressive pop-artist has exhibited across New York, India, Singapore, Paris and Miami and is the only Indian artist to be commissioned with Bollywood walk of fame; a series of fifty-six hand-painted acrylic on canvas work which pays tribute to the iconic stars from the silent era in 1930s till the stars of 2009. (Gupta, 2011) (See Annexure- 7)

Anupam Tomar, upcoming Pop artist is also the owner of 'Arrested by Art'; a one of its kind concept boutique which brings together a gallery, a store and a live on site studio. (Arrested By Art official website) His works are defined as urban contemporary art and design, incorporating a plethora of mediums from canvas and digital media to fine art illustrations. (Sabarwal, 2012) (See annexure- 8)

"Fashion has always had a place in art," You look at a painting and remember how beautifully the subjects are dressed. "Art has a place in fashion, too." Some say that Dior used to check which colours a painter friend of his was using and then use the same ones in his collection that season. (Tillotson, 2009)

The jester king of Indian fashion, Manish Arora is one of the first designers in India who takes inspiration for confetti clothing from Parisian cafes and Manga comics, engraving Walt Disney characters on the Indian psyche using the best of our traditional embroidery techniques, who references movies, books and people on the streets to make a hugely successful line of clothing that has everybody from Steven Tyler to Bjork hooked. (Kili, 2011) (See Annexure- 9)

'Nida Mahmood' by Nida Mahmood epitomizes her design philosophy "art translated" as it embodies a unique look with her Avant Grande contemporary designs – Art meets Fashion. Style meets Street. Her other venture New India Bioscope Co. is inspired from the quirks and vibrancy of faces, dialogues, walls, chai stalls, hoardings, songs, rickshaws, crows and cows of Indian multi-hued creating Technicolour drama. (Nida Mahmood-Home) (See Annexure- 10)

House of Masaba ,fashion label owned upcoming designer Masaba Gupta has recently (Spring 2012) reinvented the traditional Indian sarees with quirky, modern motifs and Pop Art prints that are targeted at young female consumers.(See annexure-11) (Celebration Nation, 2012)

What's common to Arjun Kapoor- Parineeti Chopra's debut film, Rowdy Rathore and the Parambrata Chatterjee and Aprita-starrer Abhimaan? It's their posters, which are colourful - even garish - loud and kitschy. All these posters have used *pop art to swing the focus back on kitsch in the slick, glam world of films and ads reminding of yesteryear billboards.* (See Annexure-12) (Dasgupta, 2012)

A few of Indian Pop Artist and owners of Pop labels have been interviewed with the help which it has been explained in findings about their work, when they began and how they have evolved the Pop scene in India.

4. Methodology

The objective of this research paper is to study Indian Lifestyle and Fashion industry's take on Iconic Pop art phenomenon of the West in 60's and 70's.

The first step towards objective- In - Depth interviews with leading Pop artists and owners of lifestyle and fashion labels providing Pop art inspired products to understand why these brand owners choose to produce products with pop art prints, how they began and their take on pop art movement.

Second step towards the objective-

- Interviews with consumers of Pop Art products at Thank God for Design Exhibit in New Delhi, Delhi Art Gallery in New Delhi and Jahangir Art Gallery, Mumbai.
- Other consumer interactions at retail outlets providing with Quirky and Pop Art products to consumers like Attic in Mumbai, Evolv in New Delhi
- Further interactions with a few art collector and aspiring art collectors in India.

Third step towards the objective- Through random sampling consumers between age group 16-40 were interviewed to explore their knowledge about Pop Art and labels providing with such products.

5 Findings

In a country defined by diversity of its culture, every state in India speaks differently on what's popular. Yet some objects like the celebrated Bollywood, the National Animal Tiger, Royal Elephants to Hindu God and Goddess's, the holy Cow and so on; are some examples of what's Popular in India throughout despite the cultural diversity.

Regardless of POP being a rage in west especially for its Billboard and ad inspired paintings in UK and USA, Indian Pop was defined by everything popular in India itself. Secondary research on Pop art has shown that the enthusiasm generated by Pop art since Warhol time has never really died down, it has increased and evolved and is greater today than ever before.

It has been found in interviews with various artists that what led these artist towards Art and more precisely Pop art has been huge global exposure for Indians specially when they were growing up, some went for higher education abroad, for some it was family influence while for some it was mere passion for creativity and innovation that led them towards passageway of art.

Jayesh Sachdev, Pop artist and owner of Emblem studio, based out from Pune, has paintings that range from a series 'Untitled' which concentrated on Nudes to a series 'Nirvana' which consists paintings of Lord Shiva, Buddha and so on. This recent series have been Indiascape and Animal farm. All his series are inspired from the popular motifs in India. (See annexure- 7)

Upcoming Pop artist Anupam Tomar said he gets inspired from the Pin-up Girls, Classic 60's Hollywood movies and comic books. He also makes juxtapositions inspired from popular fonts, work and colours from newspapers, hoardings, posters, magazines and translates them through his work. Some of his art is his take on Warhol and Lichtenstein's work. (See Annexure- 8)

5.1 Art meets Fashion & lifestyle

Pop has reinvented itself more than enlivening through fashion and lifestyle labels. Most Pop artists have come up with their own labels based on Pop Culture in India. These artists explain that creating such labels has helped them expand and constantly innovate in their Artwork. A person dressed in fashion clothing inspired by Pop Art reach's more consumers' mindsets, a larger audience is targeted with such labels. Change in consumer lifestyle has also led to such novelty in fashion & lifestyle industry

'Quirk Box', a popular culture inspired brands is a showcase of pop art, pop colours, hues, and every things that's quirky, it draws inspiration from famous characters from movies like Spook (Star trek), famous Bollywood characters, Japanese Manga, comic books and popular culture of different states in the country. (See annexure- 13)

Pop goes the Art is among first brands to take up POP into lifestyle industry in India. Nidhi Karnavat Chopra, artist and owner of Pop goes the art believes in expression of reality with a motto that Imagination is Illusive, think Real- POP.

She explains that her love everything colourful and street art inspired her to create something which can give home's a more personal look and speak more of one's personality and lifestyle. The brand caters to

generic as well as personalised needs of customers and gets them digitally printed on products like cushions, laptop sleeves, Tote Bags, Wall art etc.

(See annexure- 14)

Owners of Purple Jungle Iris Strill and Emeline Grasset are inspired by everyday lives of Indias, from Chaiwalls(Tea Stall owners), Auto Rickshwas to National prides like Taj Mahal, Tiger, Peacock, Lotus and to everything from the streets in India. The two French ladies define Purple Jungle as their 'twisted interpretation of India'. Their brand provides with products like Bags, Coasters, Wall art , Notebooks and furniture like small cupboards like a Tea Stall owner in the street usually owns, trunks and cushions with Prints of all that enthuse them in India. (See annexure- 15)

Manish Arora considered as the Jester King of fashion is most sought after designer when it comes to Art in fashion. Not only he has attention of the worlds Fashion experts but Sachdev and upcoming Fashion designer Masaba Gupta said in their interview that Manish Arora designs are very attentive, innovative and revolutionary, they look upto his design sensibilities and regard him as the King of Indian Pop. His other label Fish Fry is a High End label inspired from Indian culture.

In recent months even Bollywood is drawing inspiration from Pop. Producers are now getting posters made in Pop style to enhance its look and give audience something new.

What came out clear from interviews with artists is how the Indian market is ripe at the moment and is adapting to the changes, these artists are not just making such products out to their curiosity but are giving back the consumers what they want. It is a change from exotic glorification to mass glorification. What was initially thought of as low culture and degraded is now fashionably consumed in all segments of the fashion industry.

5.2 Consumers

This section looks at the consumers for the pop art/culture products and also gives an insight into the demographics of consumers interviewed.

Data was collected through interviews with consumers through convenient sampling and then snowball technique was used for age group 16-40 in Mumbai, Bangalore and New Delhi explains the consumers to be young working professionals who are Independent, experimental and Quirky. They are willing to let go of the society norms and express their persona and outlook. The choices they make for career, products they own, clothes they wear and the way they talk all define their lifestyle and personality.

These consumers are greatly influenced by movies, friends/siblings, travel and internet and thus have a great knowledge about the popular icons in the country. The generation X Above 40 is the next big growing target market for the Pop products. Also this generation has been found knowing more about Pop Art style, these are people who appreciate such artwork, their understanding for such comes more for reasons like; they have grown up watching the pin-up girls posters, classic movies of late 60's and 70's specially Alfred Hitchcock ones and also have the deep pockets to spend on Art. A lot have been influenced by their elder siblings or an important person in the family towards Pop era in USA.

This Generation X is changing and adapting to the new consumerism which is formed by their children or younger siblings/friends. This adaptation to new trends has made this the most exciting target market with the disposable income. It's the right time for Pop art brands to capture these consumers by positioning themselves in the right way.

There is a growing inquisitiveness amongst consumers about such brands which make them delineate their individuality in a more accurate style. Those who had purchased any product said they are truly excited by the idea of a brand providing such art on everyday products, it is exclusive and helps portray ones individuality.

However one attention-grabbing facet about Indian Pop Art/culture is that there is a delusion of grouping popular culture inspired brands into Kitsch Industry. This explains that even though a lot of consumers follow Pop Art, but it not communicated well in India for them to know the character of such Art.

An art collector Mr Sudhir Bhari, Mumbai (Senior Manger, Marketing of Vaccines, and McCann Erikson) said he loves decorating walls at home with attractive paintings and soon it became a collection, visiting stores like Attic often with his wife made him familiar to Pop Art. His first Pop art painting is by Jayesh Sachdev; A Elephant with neon pink background that pops just right.

5.3 Conclusion

The Indian consumer is the target of the rest of the world, being a ripe market, Indian brands have a huge potential to capture their niches' and go big by strategising and positioning themselves exactly how would want to be perceived. Consumers have been found to be knowledgeable about what they want to wear on what occasions which make it easier for the brands to explain who they are, why consumers should pick them or make the switch from another brand to them.

Use of Indian popular culture Icons has made the Kitsch industry come up with their own Pop Art collection which is unique and local with a global appeal. The westernisation of these products is just a few steps away once they are positioned well in the Indian market and moreover in Indian consumers mind. With High end labels like Satya Paul, Manish Arora and Nida Mahmood to premium labels like Play Clan, Quirk Box, Pop Goes the Art etc and to mass labels like Chumbak , Happily Unmarried etc are all examples of brands that have stirred the fashion industry with their design appeal ,both in silhouettes and product design with the use of popular icons and pop colors and reinventing the pop art scene in 'Desi Style'.

6. Limitation of Study

The main limitation of study is lack of documentation of literature about the Indian Pop Art movement. There is no clarity on when artists in India became aware about Pop Art movement of West and did it influence their style of work. It is also unclear if famous Indian motifs illustrated through paintings were ever considered as popular culture art.

Another limitation being of Place, consumers and artists from only a few major metropolitan cities have been interviewed. Further in depth research of various other cities in India like Chennai, Mangalore, Kolkatta, Chandigarg, Lucknow, Bhopal etc would have helped in understanding a wider consumer understanding and artist viewpoint into the Indian Pop scene.

6.1 Scope for research

Further research on the Indian Pop Art movement which will answer whether or not Indian Pop Art ever followed the footsteps of Western Pop style could improve the depth of analysis of Indian Pop scene.

This investigation into the Indian Pop Art scene was indented as just a starting point of what can be developed and researched on in further studies to narrow down POP in India.

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The City as Cultural Fashion Icon: London and Shanghai

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Abstract

The City as Cultural Fashion Icon: London and Shanghai

'People do not live in places, but in the description of places'

Wallace Stevens

Both Csikszentmihalyi (1999) and Florida (2002) endorse the notion of a geography of creativity, undoubtedly fashion is not created in a vacuum and it could be argued that modern fashion exists in the imagined landscapes of cities such as London and Shanghai.

London has been anointed the 'the coolest city on earth' (Harding, 2007), the 'creative centre of the world' (Wolstenholme, in Derbyshire 2005). London has also been described as a city of ghosts (Gill, 2012); ghosts of past eras, often romanticised, and undoubtedly London's cultural heritage its history, art and architecture provide rich inspiration for fashion practitioners (O'Neill, 2007). London's cityscape provided the backdrop to the Swinging Sixties, Punk and Cool Britannia offering diverse visions of a city with a long association with fashion manufacture and trade. Generations of tourists are invited to tread in the fashion footsteps of their style heroes on Carnaby Street and the Kings Road, and this topographical imagery is often evoked in contemporary fashion marketing campaigns.

Shanghai similarly holds a prominent place in the fashion industry's collective consciousness: the Paris of the East. Yet whilst the modernity of 21st century Shanghai's architecture provides a cinematic backdrop to many current fashion campaigns, there is a danger that Shanghai is confined to one temporal existence; that of 1920's dancehalls and opium dens. Both Western and Chinese fashion designers are complicit in this cultural essentialism (Tsui, 2009) and it is a challenge for designers and brands how to simultaneously embrace yet escape the iconic status of the city.

This paper traces the development of London and Shanghai as repositories of fashion dreams, and explores how modern fashion can reference the histories of these exalted fashion cities, without reducing them to archaic clichés.

Introduction

'...people do not live in places, but in the description of places.'

(Wallace Stevens in O'Neill, 2007, p185).

The relationship between cities and fashion is a mutually supportive one; Simmel argues that fashion is both central to, and expressive of, metropolitan life (in O'Neill, 2007, p18). The production complexes, by which fashion is inspired, created, sold and worn, operate in cities (Huck, 2007). Prestigious fashion schools, design studios and garment factories are located in cities. Fashion magazines (Barthes' cultural intermediaries (Rocamora, 2009)), and brands are headquartered in cities. Fashion consumers window-shop the latest trends, and parade multiple fashion identities on the 'urban catwalk' of city streets (Huck, 2007, p45). Fashions- both real and mythical- are not created in a vacuum, and it can be argued that modern fashion exists in the stores, on the streets and in the imagined landscapes of cities such as London and Shanghai, cities that trade on their fashion heritage to perpetuate their status as cultural fashion icons.



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Keywords: London, Shanghai, fashion cities, cheongsam, department store, fashion icon, tailoring, shopping, heritage



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So deeply ingrained on the collective consciousness are the shopping routes and street names of London's West End: Oxford Street- Regent Street- Piccadilly Circus, that during the 1941 Battle for Hong Kong, British soldiers navigated a series of defensive tunnels, pillboxes and bunkers on the Shing Mun Redoubt² bearing the names, and following the layout, of London's famous shopping thoroughfares (Lukacs, 2011). Indeed many cities are navigated via fashionable retail addresses and some cities have become synonymous with fashion itself. Renowned globally as centres both of fashion creation and consumption, immortalised in text and image, certain fashion cities possess a cachet that extends far beyond those who shop, visit or reside there.

Twenty-first century fashion is an increasingly globalized industry and experience; greater mobility, developing economies and advances in e-tailing make it possible to 'shop the world' literally, remotely or both. Whilst some theorists had argued that globalization would homogenize cultural experiences including retail (Levitt, 1983), both Csikszentmihalyi (1999) and Florida (2002) endorse the concept of geographies of creativity, whereby certain locations attract creative producers and consumers, thereby increasing their creative capital. Speaking at The Savoy Hotel, on the occasion of his retrospective exhibition being hosted yards away at Somerset House (the current home of the British Fashion Council and London Fashion Week), legendary fashion designer Valentino Garavani called London 'the capital of the world' (personal correspondence). This opinion is in accord with the 2011 Global Language Monitor that ranked London first on a measure of cities' social media profiles (Mower, 2011). Undoubtedly London's cultural heritage, its history, art and architecture have inspired many designers (O'Neill, 2007).

London has been given the title of 'the coolest city on earth' (Harding, 2007), the 'creative centre of the world' (Wolstenholme, in Derbyshire, 2005). London's cityscape provided the backdrop to the Swinging Sixties, Punk and Cool Britannia, offering diverse visions of a city with a long association with fashion manufacture and trade. London has also been described as a city of ghosts (Gill, 2012); ghosts of past eras, often romanticized. Generations of visitors are invited to tread in the fashion footsteps of their style heroes on Carnaby Street and the Kings Road, and the imagery of London's fashionable pedigree is often evoked in contemporary fashion marketing campaigns.

Shanghai, similarly, holds a prominent place in the fashion industry's collective consciousness: the Paris of the East (Steele & Major, 1999). The imagery of Shanghai's heyday- cheongsam-clad beauties in smoky nightclubs- is repeatedly referenced in fashion collections and fashion marketing materials. Yet whilst the modernity of 21st century Shanghai's architecture provides a cinematic backdrop to many current fashion campaigns, there is a danger that Shanghai is confined to one temporal existence; that of 1920's dance-halls and opium dens. Both Western and Chinese fashion designers are complicit in this cultural essentialism (Tsui, 2009), and it is a challenge for new designers and brands to simultaneously embrace yet escape the iconic status of the city.

This paper traces the development of London and Shanghai as repositories of fashion dreams, and explores how modern fashion can reference the histories of these exalted fashion cities without reducing them to archaic clichés.

London as a fashion city

'London is a roost for every bird'

So wrote Benjamin Disraeli in 1870, and this description of London, (quoted on the spine of the Autumn 2012 edition of *The Town Magazine*), underscores how London's diversity of population and tolerance to difference is both a source of the original development, and a key feature of the continued appeal, of London as an iconic fashion city. To many worldwide 'London has become an idea' (Harding, 2007), one deeply intertwined with its status as a fashion city. London's fashion schools attract students from around the globe (Radclyffe-Thomas, 2011) and have nurtured many of those working in the fashion industry worldwide. Csikszentmihalyi (1999) argues that cities at the confluence of trade routes (as both London and Shanghai are) are predisposed to develop as centres of creativity, and London has a long history of

2 Part of the defensive 'Gin Drinkers Line' against the Japanese invasion of Hong Kong, December 1941.

both international trade and a fluid population³. 2012 saw London as centrepiece and backdrop to Queen Elizabeth II's Diamond Jubilee and the XXX Olympiad, and London's cultural heritage and the diversity of its population were highlighted in international media coverage. Through its long history as a centre of fashion, London has at times embraced and rejected its own heritage, often being the site of fashion revolutions.

Contemporary trends such as the cult of the celebrity and the metrosexual male, as well as modern tailoring and men's fashion all reference one of the first fashion revolutionaries: George 'Beau' Brummel (1778-1840). Brummel rejected the 'ornamentation and excess' of the eighteenth century and was the living embodiment of a new simplicity, of 'refinement and restraint' in menswear (Shannon, 2006, p130). As part of the London Regency social scene, Brummel's every move- including his toilette (he was reported as taking five hours to dress)- was the focus of attention and imitation, and his patronage of London tailors helped usurp their Parisien counterparts and establish London, (especially Mayfair), as the pre-eminent centre of tailoring (Shannon, 2006). Brummel collaborated with his London tailor- Jonathan Meyer- establishing alternative trouser styles and utilising pioneering fabrics and techniques (<http://www.meyerandmortimer.co.uk/>). Meyer and Mortimer tailors are still trading today within yards of the commemorative statue of Beau Brummel that stands at the intersection of Jermyn Street and the Piccadilly Arcade. London's Savile Row bespoke tailors are credited with creating the dinner jacket and have dressed esteemed male fashion icons including Edward VII, James Bond, Mick Jagger and Tom Ford (Temple, 2012). Indeed the street has such a strong resonance with the trade practised there that the rough translation of the Japanese word for tailoring is 'Savile Row' (背広) (Cress, 2011).

Whilst the centre for men's fashions continued to develop around Savile Row, the big revolution in women's fashion shopping, and indeed the 'iconography of consumer culture', was brought about by the introduction of the department store (Nava, 1997, p64). Previously confined to a more domestic sphere, women's participation in public life⁴, their mobility and even political consciousness were enhanced by a new-found social freedom to shop, spectate and parade, to and through, the new modern department stores (Nava, 1997), that were opening up in all the major cities of the Western world. Thus the department store was established as, and remains, an inherently urban creation, retail on a huge physical scale⁵. London is the site of two of the world's most iconic department stores: Harrods and Selfridges. Founded in the mid-nineteenth century, Harrods claims to be the world's most famous luxury shop; Britain's first moving staircase was installed at Harrods in 1898, (with brandy and smelling salts provided for nervous customers); in 1921 it was a Harrods bear, bought for one-year-old Christopher Robin that inspired A. A. Milnes' Winnie the Pooh stories (<http://www.harrods.com>).

When Gordon Selfridge opened his self-named department store in 1909, he envisaged it not just as a shopping emporium, but as a meeting place for fashionable urbanites and visitors; it quickly became one of the key spots on the London tourist trail (Nava, 1997). Speaking in 2012, as Selfridges was named Best Department Store in the World for the second year running by the Intercontinental Group of Department Stores, managing director Anne Pitcher talked of how 'delivering an extraordinary London experience' is key to Selfridges' success (Alexander, 2012). Both Harrods and Selfridges, along with Liberty and Harvey Nichols, remain central to London's status as an international retail destination (<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-us/what-we-do/public-diplomacy/great-campaign/shopping/>).

At the opposite end of the scale, quite literally, it was the small boutiques launched in the late 1950s and early 1960s by London's designer-entrepreneurs- Mary Quant, John Stephen and Barbara Hulanicki- that focused the eyes of the world on London youth fashion as immortalised in Time magazine's 1966 'Guide to Swinging London' (Ashmore, 2006). Mary Quant's shop Bazaar on the Kings Road, and John Stephen's self-named Carnaby Street store became meccas for the post-war baby boom generation, spawning a host of

3 95% of those moving to London since 1995 were born outside the UK (Tate Modern, 2007) whilst over the last decade London's foreign-born population reached 2.6m or approximately a third (Taylor, 2012, p23).

4 Harrods of Knightsbridge prided itself on being where 'it is perfectly proper for a lady to meet a gentleman' (Nava, 1997, p69)

5 At the turn of the 20th century, Harrods had 6,000 employees and 36 acres of shopping space across its 80 different departments (Nava, 1997, p69).

small fashion boutiques in the surrounding areas, that followed a similar merchandising and design ethos—these were definitely not shops for the older generation (Ashmore, 2006). O'Neill (2007) comments that it is often in the observations of visitors that the mythologies of fashionable cities develop, and whilst the Kings Road and Kensington shared in the spread of youth retailing, by the mid 1960s the Carnaby Street sign had become the best-selling London tourist postcard (O'Neill, 2007, p144) and the ultimate destination for, in the Kinks' memorable phrase, *dedicated followers of fashion*. Carnaby Street became synonymous with swinging London, a legend it still relies on for its retail cachet.

The Kings Road, more specifically World's End (the bend in the Kings Road), found itself at the centre of another youth fashion movement in the 1970s with the Vivienne Westwood/ Malcolm McLaren collaboration SEX, a shop that became the hangout of London's original punks (Wilcox, 2004). The baton of street-style as tourist spectacle was passed on to London's punks and O'Neill argues that 'in a very simplistic sense the tourist postcard that replaced the street sign for Carnaby Street as a symbol of vibrant street culture was the one that pictured 'punks' with spiky hair and leather jackets loitering on the Kings Road' (O'Neill, 2007, p155). The original punks were documented by Terry Jones, shot on the street against a plain white wall by photographer Steve Johnson, in a style that became known as the 'straight up' (Smedley, 2000), that is retained in i-D magazine and has become the shot of choice for fashion bloggers worldwide.

London's position as a creative centre, supported by its cultural capital of museums, art galleries and art schools (N. Radclyffe-Thomas, in press), underscores its centrality to counter-cultural or youth fashions, repeated by the 1980's Blitz Kids and the 1990's Cool Britannia phenomenon. At the same time London retains its reputation for providing the quintessential gentleman's wardrobe, and perhaps it is testament to London's diversity, tolerance and sense of humour, that these two extremes of fashion can happily coexist.

One of the most successful fashion brand stories of recent years results from the fusion of the key London factors outlined above: the combination of traditional elements of an Englishman's wardrobe, retail as spectacle and London art school cool. The influence of uniforms is discernible in Beau Brummel's wardrobe (<http://www.meyerandmortimer.co.uk/>) and it is another military-influenced garment—the trench-coat—that has helped put London back on the twenty-first century fashion map; chief creative director Christopher Bailey (RCA educated) and CEO Angela Ahrendts (and previously Rose Marie Bravo) have revived the fortunes at Burberry on an unprecedented, and much-reported, scale. Trading on nostalgia for heritage brands, Burberry London⁶ exemplifies what Rocamora (2009) has termed 'city-branding' (p84) whereby fashion brands are promoted by way of their association with specific cities. This city-branding is reinforced through the use of London supermodel Kate Moss in advertising campaigns, the use of London as a backdrop to campaigns and even the name of one of Burberry's fragrances—Burberry London. Cities are the sites of flagship stores and Burberry, renowned for digital innovations, is utilising technology to revamp a more traditional branding arena—the in-store retail experience, creating in its Regent Street store, in Bailey's words, a 'merging of the physical world with the digital', and bringing customers' attention back to location—121 Regents Street London (Cronin, 2012).

Shanghai as a Fashion City

'Shanghai... life itself, nothing more intensely living can be imagined'

So wrote Aldous Huxley in 1926 (Fenby, 2009, p186) of the Eastern metropolis divided into a Chinese city, a French concession and a British-run international settlement, where immigrants, refugees, film stars and businesspeople from around the world comingled. Shanghai's geography—a seaport close to the Yangzi—and its status as a treaty port, contributed to its development as a centre of trade and finance throughout the nineteenth century. Shanghai was the site of internal and international business, economic development having been recognised as integral to China's modernisation (Fenby, 2009). As a result of its diverse population and openness to international influences, Shanghai became—to domestic and international audiences—symbolic of China's progress, its residents esteemed as trendsetters in social custom and fashion alike (Fenby, 2009; Ko, 1999); the women in Shanghai and other coastal cities were amongst the first

6 Burberry brands: Prorsum, London, Brit, Sport and Black Label and Blue Label for the Japanese and Korean market.

to have unbound (natural) feet (Ko, 1999, p147). This reputation for trendsetting endured even under the most difficult circumstances; at the height of the cultural revolution 'Everyone wanted to go to Shanghai, because it was rumoured that there one could get uniforms that were not cut like grain sacks' (Steele, in Steele & Major, 1999, p15).

In his history of modern China, Jonathan Fenby (2009) provides a vivid introduction to the modern metropolis during the first few decades of the twentieth century. Shanghai's economy accounted for half the country's foreign trade; Westerners founded the first private banks in China in monumental buildings along the riverside Bund, and lived in spectacular Art Deco apartments in the foreign concessions, considered the most advanced part of the middle kingdom. Shanghai had China's first stock exchange, its biggest shipyards and its first electric lights; half of China's motorcars were in Shanghai. Overseas Chinese- disdained by some for having abandoned the motherland- were welcome in Shanghai and brought innovations and funding to the city. Entrepreneurs flocked in; a third of the city's cotton mills were Japanese owned. White Russians came to Shanghai to work as shopkeepers, bodyguards and dancehall hostesses. Shanghai was renowned for its literature, art, film and political debate as well as its capacious department stores and, of course, its risqué nightlife, as witnessed by film director Josef von Sternberg who described the interior of The Great World Entertainment Centre (owned by Pockmarked Huang) as populated by:

'... gambling tables, singsong girls, magicians, pickpockets, slot machines, fireworks, birdcages, fans, stick incense, acrobats, and ginger... restaurants, a dozen barbers, and earwax extractors... jugglers, herb medicines, ice cream parlours, photographers, a new bevy of girls, their high-collared gowns slit to reveal their hips, exposed toilets... shooting galleries, fan-tan tables, revolving wheels, massage benches, acupuncture, hot-towel counters, dried fish and intestines, and dance platforms served by a horde of music makers competing with each other to see who could drown out the others... girls whose dresses were slit to their armpits, a stuffed whale, story-tellers, balloons, peep shows, masks, a mirror maze, two love-letter booths with scribes who guaranteed results, rubber goods, and a temple filled with ferocious gods and joss sticks' (Sternberg, in Fenby, 2009, p186).

By the 1920s department stores or 'baihou gongsi'⁷ (百货公司) inhabited monumental sites on and around Nanjing Road, a location selected for its good feng shui. Shanghai's department stores, especially the 'Big 4' (Sincere先施百货, Wing On永安, the Sun Sun新新公司 and Sun大新公司), provided a cosmopolitan experience; in common with similar retail emporia internationally, these department stores were not just architectural monuments, embodiments and symbols of the city's prosperity (Lien, 2011) but also social and cultural centres. The seven-storey Sun Sun store, which opened in 1926, housed the city's first ballroom and its first radio station (Stearns, 2006; MacPherson, 1998). Department stores exposed a wider audience to global brands and aesthetics; Paris fashions were available in Shanghai stores three to five months after their release (Ling, 2007). Nanjing Road remains a focal point of Shanghai fashion retail, with many international brands' flagship stores located in the Plaza 66 Mall at 1266 Nanjing Road West.

In the 1920s and 1930s Shanghai was a truly cosmopolitan city, internationally renowned and a required stop on world cruises, for visitors seeking- in Mao's term- the 'sugar-coated bullets' of city life: gambling, drugs and prostitution (Bailey, 2001, pp59-60). Eileen Chang described the effects of living in such an environment, writing

'The people of Shanghai have been distilled out of Chinese tradition by the pressures of modern life; they are a deformed mix of old and new. Though the result may not be healthy, there is a curious wisdom to it' (quoted in the foreword to Lust Caution, 2007, pp. ix-x).

It was this diverse, energetic, cosmopolitan environment that fostered the development of one of the most iconic and enduring fashion images- 'Shanghai Xiaojie' (Shanghai Miss)- the modern Shanghai woman. Increased safety in the city and social developments, meant women and girls traversed the city unescorted, 'provoking a group calling itself 'Husbands of Emancipated Women,' to complain that their wives did not come home at night and acted like 'alley cats'' (NCDN 4/3/1927 in Fenby, 2009, p184). Influenced by Western hair and make-up styles and products from Europe and the United States, the Shanghai woman- or

7 Literally: company selling hundreds of goods (Lien, 2011)

Chinese Flapper (Ko, 1999)- whitened her skin, curled her eyelashes and hair, and wore stockings and heels with her short, closefitting cheongsam (Fenby, 2009; Mei, 2004).

Initially worn as a symbol of gender equality by a group of Shanghai high school students (Mei, 2004), the qipao⁸ or cheongsam gained popularity during the 1920s and 30s; subject to Western fashion influences the fit evolved into the manifestation recognisable today (Clark, 1999; Ling, 2007; Mei, 2004; Tsui, 2009). Originally a one-piece unfitted garment constructed from a single piece of fabric, the introduction of darts and cutting lines is testament to the influence of Western tailors based in Shanghai (Finnane, 1996). The popularity of the cheongsam corresponded with societal changes (Ling, 2007), and came to symbolise modernity (Clark, 1999)- an urban modernity- and became the essential mode for 'shimao' (时髦 style of the times) women (Carroll in Ling, 2007, p14). The cheongsam's popularity spread and its styling evolved, yet it retained a strong association with Shanghai, the Paris of the East (Steele & Major, 1999, p48).

For those who could not visit in person, the Shanghai Miss of the 1920s and 30s was immortalised in films such as the 1932 von Sternberg film 'Shanghai Express' (starring Anna May Wong and Marlene Dietrich) and the 1935 film 'New Woman' (starring Ruan Lingyu). Chinese brands also helped perpetuate the imagery of the modern Shanghai woman through their marketing materials. Originating in the late 19th century, by the 1930s the Yuefenpai (calendar girls) showed glamorous Chinese women with jobs and past-times not necessarily available to them in reality (Yin, 2012), advertising cigarettes, medicines and cosmetics. The promotional materials of Kwong Sang Hong, (one of the first cosmetic companies in China), still uses its 'Two Girls' brand and logo (Yin, 2012).

These commercial illustrations of the Shanghai Miss have become part of Chinese identity; they were reproduced on souvenirs in Taiwan and Hong Kong in the late 1990s, contributing to nostalgia for 1930's Shanghai, and introducing this imagery to new Western audiences 'as quintessential icons of China chic' (Ko, 1999, pp147-148). The Hong Kong fashion brand Shanghai Tang continually revisits this imagery in its designs and marketing materials. A soundtrack of remixed 1930's classics from their 'Shanghai Lounge Collection' serenades visitors to its retro-styled stores. The brand emphasises its authenticity and the heritage of its product by highlighting its use of Shanghainese craftsmanship in its Imperial Tailoring line; (<http://www.shanghaitang.com/world-of-shanghai-tang/imperial-tailoring/womens-portfolio.html>) many Shanghai tailors having migrated to Hong Kong after 1949 (Clark, 2009; Ling, 2007).

1949 started decades of isolation for China, perhaps explaining why the collective image of Chinese fashion remains one from the 1930s. Reforms and modernisation began in 1987 with the open door policy; Shanghai was amongst the first cities opened to international trade, and currently vies with Beijing as China's top fashion city (Coghlan, June 26). Events like Hong Kong's return to Chinese control in 1997, and the Beijing Olympics in 2008, have focused the world's eyes on China; this media attention and the aggressive expansion of Western brands into China mean the familiar Shanghai styles are repeatedly revisited. As China's economy grows exponentially, luxury fashion brands have entered the market at an unprecedented rate. Modern Shanghai retains a reputation for its openness and international spirit, and Shanghai, as China's business centre, is the mainland headquarters for almost all foreign brands (Coghlan, 2012, June 26). A major advantage Shanghai has over its rival city Beijing in the retail sphere, is its architecture; the wide avenues of Huaihai Road and Nanjing Road providing prime retail space. The block along Huaihai Middle Road between Huangpi South Road and Songshan Road in Puxi district is 'perhaps the most dominant cluster of flagship stores in all of China' (Coghlan, 2012, April 18), and home to the new Richemont Retail Academy. Whilst these streets are home to huge luxury malls, many Western brands have chosen to open stores in Shanghai's heritage buildings, especially along the Bund (Coghlan, 2012, June 26). Xintiandi, an area of 19th century Shikumen housing and site of the First National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, has been refurbished as a luxury lifestyle complex. At the other end of the (time) scale, the modernist redevelopment of the Pudong area, including the iconic Pearl Tower, also provides luxury retail space.

8 'Cheongsam' (𧄂𧄂) is the Cantonese translation meaning long shirt or gown which is the term better known in the West; however the Mandarin translation is 'qipao'(𧄂𧄂); literally 'a banner gown'. The Manchus were 'people of the banner' and thus 'qipao' possibly reflects the similarities to the Manchu female robes (Garrett, 1994).

Shanghai locations, old and new, provide the backdrop for many photo-shoots and fashion marketing campaigns. *China Vogue* launched in September 2005, its first cover featuring Du Juan and Gemma Ward shot by Patrick Demarchelier against the Pudong skyline in an editorial 'Shanghai Diary' (B. Radclyffe-Thomas, 2013). Karl Lagerfeld premiered Chanel's Paris-Shanghai Métiers d'Art collection at a screening in Shanghai on a glass-sided barge with a view of the Pudong skyscrapers as backdrop. Marc Jacobs used a vintage train journey from Paris to Shanghai as the centrepiece of his Autumn/Winter 2012/13 collection for Louis Vuitton; after showing in Paris Fashion Week the collection was represented in Shanghai. For whilst Beijing is the centre of fashion media in China, and thus the home of most fashion-related events, Shanghai remains at the core of Western notions of Chinese glamour and decadence. As Karl Lagerfeld says 'Shanghai has a very special reputation, very different from other Chinese cities' (Movius, 2009).

The exoticisation of the foreign has long provided inspiration for Western designers (Craik, 1993) and the decadence of old Shanghai is reworked multiple times through collections at luxury and high street levels. John Galliano's Autumn/Winter 1997/98 collection for Dior, Tom Ford's Autumn/Winter 2004 collection for YSL, Marc Jacobs' Louis Vuitton Spring/Summer 2011 and Ralph Lauren's Autumn/Winter 2011 collection are all reinterpretations of 1930's Shanghai. Lauren stating that 'the China I am emotionally involved with in the show is really China of the 1930s' (Lauren, 2011). Topshop produced an Eastern-inspired collection in 2011, entitled 'Shanghai'. But Western fashion designers are not the only ones reworking these themes, Chinese designers have been criticised for presenting essentialist visions of Chineseness in the same vein (Tsui, 2009). And this is where a potential problem lies: in the move to expand into Asia, fashion brands risk slipping into orientalist stereotypes, as witnessed in the backlash to Karl Lagerfeld's Paris-Shanghai film, where Coco Chanel visits 1960's Shanghai in her dreams, and introduces Communist China to the Chanel jacket.

The Future for the Fashion City?

Richard Florida's (2002) concept of the creative class puts the city at the epicentre of creative production and consumption. Gilbert (2000, p19) sees cities as both 'the physical context for fashion' and 'the objects of fashion.' The New York-Paris-London syndrome (Hollander in Moore & Burt, 2007) underscores the important role certain cities play in the fashion system.

Undoubtedly Shanghai has a claim to be added to this list of cities, whose names add value to a fashion brand, or suggests a fashion marketing campaign or editorial. But whereas London inhabits multiple fashion identities spanning its distant and recent past, Shanghai is currently confined to a single point in time, to one role in the fashion imaginary. China, keen to explore and reclaim its past may be, at present, complicit in this city-storytelling, but we must all be conscious of how stereotyping reduces, essentializes, naturalizes and fixes difference (Hall, 1996).

Settling for one fashion identity may exclude Shanghai from the contemporary, for whilst the stereotypical London gent in his Savile Row tailored clothes has successfully been updated for the 21st century, it is unlikely that the cheongsam-clad vamp can provide a realistic fashion future for Shanghai.

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Sari – The Iconic Attire of India

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Abstract

Sari, a typical unstitched draped garment is undoubtedly a part of every Indian woman's wardrobe. A rectangular length of cloth with its dimensions varying from 4 to 9 yards lengthwise and about a yard widthwise, the versatile sari is presented in a variety of fabrics and textures and draped in diverse styles that have originated from different regions of India.

The beginning of the sari is not corroborated due to lack of historical documentation. However certain Gandhara figures from Kushan period as early as 130 B.C. suggest draped clothing very similar to the sari.

The sari as worn today, with a close-fitted blouse and an underskirt called the petticoat, developed in the early 20th century, when women started to play an active role beyond the realm of their homes. Post independence, the sari attained the status of being a national symbol, an identity of India recognizable worldwide.

In the past century, different sari styles have evolved with Indian icons from different fields setting trends that have been emulated by the masses. To name a few, the diaphanous chiffon sari pioneered by Maharani Indira Devi, handloom cotton saris worn by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India, and the luxurious Kanjeevaram silk saris popularized by Rekha, noted Bollywood actress. Indian designers too have added to the repertoire of saris by experimenting with the fabric, ornamentation and draping styles.

The universal appeal of the sari is evident with designers from the West like Valentino and Jean Paul Gautier taking inspiration from the timeless garment and international celebrities like Paris Hilton, Naomi Campbell, Liz Hurley and Lady Gaga sporting the sari on occasions.

The paper would capture the essence of the eternal Indian sari and delve into the popular sari styles that have evolved over a period of time. An insight into the various factors that have influenced the ageless garment would also be detailed.

Introduction

Sari, a typical unstitched draped garment is undoubtedly a part of every Indian woman's wardrobe. The classic garment worn since ancient times continues to thrive in contemporary India with subtle changes adapting to today's women and their lifestyles. A sari has an emotional connect with its wearer, playing an important role at different stages of her life. In urban India, the sari symbolizes the transition from adolescence to womanhood when a teenager looks forward to wearing a sari on her farewell from school; a young would-be bride picks up the choicest of saris for her trousseau and further receives them as gifts on procreation. The finest of saris regarded for their sentimental value are heirlooms that are passed on from mothers to daughters. The neatly draped garment also serves as a typical uniform for women employed with airlines, hotels, hospitals and other sectors across India, conveying proficiency and precision. The versatile sari has many manifestations: sensuous and alluring, power and maturity, culture and tradition, modesty and a marked identity intrinsic to India.

The word 'sari' known universally has its origin from the south-western Dravidian word *sire*. Other indigenous names for the sari include *pudava* in Kerala, *selai* in Tamil Nadu, *lugda* in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, *lugdi* in Uttar Pradesh, *saarhi* in Orissa, among others. A rectangular length of cloth with its dimensions varying from 4 to 9 yards lengthwise and about a yard widthwise, the sari conforms to the principles of purity prescribed by the Hindu culture, due to its seamless quality. Legally, the sari is categorized as a textile, and not a clothing item. Thus the sari is exempted from sales tax under the Bombay Sales Tax Act 1959, giving it an advantage of cheaper manufacturing cost in comparison to readymade garments.

Keywords: Traditional, Ethnic, National, Handloom, Drape, Bollywood, Designer, Icon

The fluid sari is presented in a variety of fabrics and textures and draped in diverse styles that have originated from different regions of India. The saris of India can be classified according to the technique of production specific to a state. There is an array of traditional saris that are hand-woven, resist-dyed, embroidered and printed. To name a few exquisite woven silk saris, Benaras brocades from Uttar Pradesh, Kanjeevarams from Tamil Nadu, Paithani from Maharashtra; resist-dyed saris like the Bandhani from Gujarat and Rajasthan, Pochampalli from Andhra Pradesh, Bandhas from Orissa; printed Kalamkari from Andhra Pradesh and embroidered saris like Ilkal from Karnataka, Chikankari from Uttar Pradesh and Kantha from West Bengal.

Different regional, ethnic and tribal communities all have their own sari styles and draping methods (Lynton, 1995). The sari divided into three sections, the field, lengthwise borders and the end-piece, when draped in a variety of ways, dramatically converts the flat piece of cloth into a structured garment. Noted French anthropologist, Ms. Chantal Boulanger has documented ninety seven different sari drapes prevalent in India. Some of the known draping styles include the *nivi* with pleats tucked in the front and end-piece pleated and draped over the left shoulder and hanging down at the back; Maharashtran *kachchha* style with hind pleats creating a forked trouser-like effect; Northern style with the end-piece draped from the back to front, covering the chest, and the Dravidian style with a pleated flounce around the waist.

The beginning of the sari is not corroborated due to lack of historical documentation. However certain Gandhara figures from Kushan period as early as 130 B.C. suggest draped clothing very similar to the sari. The great Indian epic, Mahabharata exemplifies sari as the attire of princess Draupadi, who was considered a role model for Hindu women. Another significant reference from the 5th century AD is the depiction of two women in the Ajanta Caves, wearing sari-like drape. As per Ghurye, 1951, in the 10th century AD, the commonly worn female costume in Northern India consisted of the sari covering the entire body with a portion of it draped over the head. There is evidence of the sari draped in a different way by the women of South India from the 17th and 18th century Hindu court paintings.

In the past century, different sari styles have evolved with Indian icons from different fields setting trends that have been followed by the masses. The changing role of women and their position in society coupled with socio-cultural and political factors have influenced the sari trends visible in the 20th century.

Birth of *Nivi* Style Sari Drape

The sari as worn today, with a close-fitted blouse and an underskirt called the petticoat, developed in the early 20th century, when women started to play an active role beyond the realm of their homes. Historians claim that in 1864, Gyanodanandini, Rabindranath Tagore's sister-in-law pioneered the *nivi* style of draping the sari. She was inspired by the Parsi ladies in Bombay, who wore the sari with a blouse and petticoat. Following the public appearance of Gyanodanandini in the remodeled sari style, the wives of other Indian men employed by the colonial government adopted the trend. The stitched blouse worn with the sari incorporated features of the English blouse like lace trims, ruffles and frills etc. The folds of the sari were kept in place with decorative brooch, pinned on the shoulder. At the same time, in the late 19th century, the sari as a typical Indian garment came into limelight when the famous artist, Raja Ravi Varma draped the Hindu goddesses and the upper class ladies in saris. Soon after the *nivi* style sari was worn by women across India, a style preferred over other regional draping styles.

The Diaphanous Chiffon Sari

In the early 20th century, when the royal Indian women became more socially active, they fashioned their attire in order to match up to their Western counterparts, yet at the same time preserve the traditional ethos of the ensemble. The then Maharani of Cooch-Bihar, Indira Devi, who became a widow at a young age, pioneered the trend of chiffon saris in pastel colours, that were imported specially for her from Paris. The Maharani and later her daughter, Gayatri Devi, the Maharani of Jaipur were the fashion icons who popularized the sheer chiffon sari drape worn with a blouse among the royalty and the elite classes.

In the 1920s, eminent Indian painter, Ms. Amrita Sher-Gil draped herself in delicate chiffon saris edged with brocaded borders. The trend continued and in the 1940s, the transition from traditional woven saris to fine georgette saris with satin borders was visible in the costume of the then film stars of Indian cinema. The bright coloured traditional saris with intricate weaves were preserved for special occasions like weddings.

The Homegrown Khadi Sari

The liberation of the Indian women and their growing involvement in the freedom struggle of India impacted their style of dressing, favouring the sari to portray national identity with traditional virtues. The khadi saris were promoted by freedom fighters like Sarojini Naidu, Kasturba Gandhi, Vijayalaxmi Pandit and Aruna Asaf Ali. The homespun and handwoven textile conveyed an important message of adopting nationalism and discouraging western influences among the society.

Changing Preferences: From Khadi to Powerloom

Following independence, the sari continued to be a national symbol and an identity of India recognizable worldwide. However industrialization paved the way back to mill-made saris that were preferred over khadi saris by the urban women. During this time, the traditional handlooms of India got a boost from the Government, who set up the All India Handicraft Board under the guidance of Ms. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, a noted freedom fighter and social reformer.

The mid-20th century was era of the working women, multi-tasking in order to manage domestic as well as professional responsibilities. The change in the women's dress code was evident with the donning of the *salwar kameez*, a more convenient daily wear option. However, the sari continued to be in fashion, worn on formal and auspicious occasions.

Bollywood Saris in Vogue

The modernization of India helped the development of the film industry that promoted western images, fashions and styles through Hindi film stars (Bahl, 2007). Fashion magazines like *Eve's Weekly* in the 1950s and *Femina* in the 1960s put forward fashion trends that were emulated by the readers. In the 1960s, the Indian cinema provided the biggest recreation to the Indian society. Along with the regional movies, English movies too had a socio-cultural impact, influencing lifestyles and fashion. Adopting from the western culture, Indian women became extremely social, hosting lavish parties with dancing, a means of entertainment.

In 1967, Ms. Leena Daru, a renowned costume designer innovated the stitched sari, worn by the leading film star Asha Parekh in the Hindi movie, 'Do Badan'. The easy to wear stitched sari, just zipped on the wearer with pleats and end piece sewn in place, was readily accepted by the socialites. There was a renewed interest in the sari in materials like chiffon and Chantilly lace, teamed with sleeveless blouses.

A hipster sari, tied below the navel and wrapped twice around the hips was popularized by film star Mumtaz in the Hindi movie, *Bramhachari*. The different sari drape became popularly known as the 'Mumtaz sari'.

Branded Easy Care Synthetic Saris

The 1970s witnessed an increase in synthetic saris using 100% polyester filament, manufactured and marketed by reputed brands like Garden Silks and 'Only Vimal' by Reliance. The new polyester chiffons and satins combined a low maintenance 'wash & wear' practicality with a silk look-alike dressiness, making them suitable for both casual wear and smarter occasions (Banerjee, Miller, 2008).

Back to Ethnic Fashion

In the 1980s, the synthetic saris were opposed by the sophisticated and well informed class, and there was a renewed interest for handwoven cotton and silk saris. The ethnic fashion was endorsed by film stars like

Shabana Azmi and Smita Patil who sported handloom saris. The changing preference from machine made to hand woven was attributed to the then Prime Minister's style statement. The handloom saris donned by Mrs. Indira Gandhi were an expression of national fervor, displaying the rich textile heritage of India. No one ever achieved such a political mastery of this garment as Indira Gandhi. Somehow her wardrobe represented every region, group and aspiration of hundreds of millions of ordinary Indian women (Miller, 2010). In the early 1980s, Mrs. Gandhi organized festivals of India across the globe to promote the indigenous hand-weaves and its creators. The trend of wearing regional hand woven saris in the public domain has been carried forward by her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, President of the Indian National Congress.

The Sensual Sari

In the late 1980s, noted movie actress, Sridevi who donned plain chiffon saris in blockbusters like *Mr. India* and *Chandni*, became a popular icon, communicating sensual charm through the sheer sari drape. The sensuous sari in chiffons and nets became an all-time favourite, resonating Bollywood romance.

A strong influencing factor, Indian cinema specifically Bollywood continued to play a pivotal role in dictating fashion trends, which were adopted by the common people. A famous example of the early 1990s was the ornate purple sari with an embroidered backless choli worn by Indian actress, Madhuri Dixit in the movie '*Hum Apke Hain Kaun*' that became a rage among the masses.

In the 90s, beauty pageants like the Miss India and Miss World and modeling avenues put forward new definitions of fashion and beauty for the Indian women, who were now comfortable to display their skin and flaunt their bodies. The experimental upper class teamed their saris with halter neck blouses whereas the middle class entrenched in strong Indian values preferred blouses with raised necklines alongwith the sari.

Designer Saris

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was a flurry of designers, offering variety and novelty to the confident Indian woman seeking exclusivity in her wardrobe. Fashion designers like Ritu Kumar, Tarun Tahiliani, Abu Jani & Sandeep Khosla and Rohit Bal presented stylish and elaborate saris for their upmarket clientele.

In 1994, the sari further attained a nationalistic symbol when Indian representatives like Sushmita Sen and Aishwarya Rai wore designer saris at beauty pageants and successfully won the coveted titles of Ms. Universe and Miss World respectively.

Currently designers like Sabyasachi and Manish Malhotra are dressing up leading ladies in Bollywood, and their sari designs are being knocked-off by local tailors, readily available to the masses who like to imitate the styles of their favourite actresses.

Small Screen Fashion

The growing middle class with increasing disposable incomes and changing lifestyles alongside exposure to Western culture via films and other electronic media has contributed to the increase in demand for newness in sari designs and styles. The popularity of TV serials and hence the clothes worn by the leading characters have greatly influenced fashion trends, promptly accepted by the viewers, even in remote areas of the country. Renowned stylist, Nim Sood is known for creating style statements for TV stars as per the character played by them. Replicas of saris worn by soap characters like Tulsi, Parvati and Tapasya are marketed in their names and are sought after by the masses.

Traditional Handwoven Sari Versus Contemporary Glamour Sari

In the 21st century, the traditional hand woven sari has lost its charm among the fashionable Indian women due to the characteristic stiff drape of the handloom fabric that does not complement the female figure. The modern age sari is glamorous; heavily embellished sheer nets and georgettes that are teamed with cleavage revealing bustiers and noodle-strapped blouses. The expensive hand woven silks are appreciated

only by a niche segment; women who want to be rooted to their traditions and others who are conscious of the uniqueness of handcrafted products and the rich Indian textile legacy. In Bollywood, there are stars like Vidya Balan and yesteryears Rekha who dress in Kanjeevaram and Benaras brocades.

Interestingly there are young designers who are closely involved with the weaver communities across India, churning out beautiful weaves that are more apt for the modern woman. Textile designer, Sanjay Garg under his label, Raw Mango has attempted to revive the Chanderi and Paithani weaves, developing a selected collection of handloom saris for the new generation. Another label, Pencildots started by designer duo, Smita and Minu, attempts to restore the languishing weaves of Karnataka.

The Experimental Sari

Over the years, designers have tried to give a make-over to the modest sari, trying out different draping styles and fabric treatments. In 1982, when British designer Zandra Rhodes presented a collection of saris with torn and frayed edges, it was surely not appreciated by the Indians. In the following years, various Indian designers have reinterpreted the sari by combining it with trousers and palazzo pants, or giving it a gown like appearance. In 2007, Satya Paul known for his colourful digital prints, showcased the trouser sari, a pre-stitched pleated drape accompanied with trousers. In 2012, fashion designer Anupamaa Dayal innovated the bikini sari, teaming the drape with hot pants. Other contemporary designers like Nida Mahmood, Masaba Gupta, Shivan & Narresh and Gaurav Gupta have added a twist to the plain sari that essentially has ramp value.

Though the youth including film actors like Sonam Kapoor and Bipasha Basu have sported quirky saris, it is apparent that the majority of Indian women prefer the conventional sari. The exploratory sari design ideas are restricted to the runway, attracting the international audience.

The Global Sari

The universal appeal of the sari is evident with designers from the West taking inspiration from the timeless garment. In 2008, Jean Paul Gaultier designed a collection of sari dresses for Hermes, which received appreciation in the West. Recently the House of Chanel displayed a sari inspired outfit as part of the collection titled 'Paris meets Dubai'. The sari has also allured international celebrities, who have tried the elegant drape on occasions. Paris Hilton, Lady Gaga, Ashley Judd, Naomi Campbell, Madonna, Julia Roberts and many other personalities across the globe have popularized the pan-Indian garment.

The sari has flourished and survived as everyday dress when most of the world has adopted western clothing (Banerjee, Miller, 2008). Though the convenient *salwar kameez* has been accepted as a daily wear across the country, the sari continues to be the formal dress. The journey of the sari from a traditional attire to a fashionable garment is evident with the wide range of designer saris created by Indian couturiers who have experimented with the fabric, surface ornamentation and draping styles. With the passage of time, the sari has retained its original flavour, encapsulating both tradition and modernity. The sari will remain a timeless garment and an Indian icon for the world.

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The Use of Chinese Cultural Icons in Fashion

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Abstract

Historically, China had been a major country for cultural export - language, festivals, cuisine, etc. - not only to neighboring Asian countries, but also to certain countries as far as in Europe and Middle East. In present days when cultural icons become an object for consumption, however, the contribution of cultural industry to GDP is less than 3% for China – much lower than that of developed countries like US, UK, or Japan.

In an increasingly materialized and dollar-driven society, human being's desire for, dependence on and infatuation with cultural icons have grown as strong as never before. This stimulates a huge potential for consumption of commodities rich in cultural icons. Luckily, with Chinese government's strong policy support as well as the advancement of technology in media communication, Chinese are now trying to nurture the mass consumption culture with China's rich historical heritage, the carrier of which being cultural icons.

Unlike industries such as movie, animation, publishing, in which China is relatively weak or even faces the awkward situation of total westernization, fashion is the one industry that has successfully incorporated Chinese cultural icons and gained world acceptance.

This paper examines the use of traditional Chinese cultural icons, both spiritual (such as courtesy, justice, honesty, and sense of honor) and visual (such as blue-and-white porcelain, the motif of dragon) as design elements for fashion. It uses case study to analyze the traditional and modified Zhongshan Suit, as well as modern dresses designed by Chinese and western designers using typical Chinese cultural icons. This paper also discusses how to let the charm of icons have its full play in the field of business and marketing within the context of inheritance of cultural legacy.

The Use of Chinese Cultural Icons in Fashion

The definition of culture has evolved significantly over time. As early as 1871, the English anthropologist Edward B. Tylor wrote, "Culture or civilization, defined in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."¹ Entering the 21st century, culture is commonly considered as a set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group. It encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs.

Though culture as a concept is infamously difficult to define, its influence in fields of political decision making, economic development, international relations and people's social life is obvious and prominent. Relationships between fashion and culture have existed since the beginning of modern civilization. Few manifestations of globalization are as visible, pervasive, and resonant as global cultural exchange, whether it is the whole cloth adoption of foreign cultural forms (such as the Disneyland in Hong Kong) or the syncretic transformation of traditional cultural expressions into altered forms (such as the Chinese cuisine served in China's more than 1,000 Kentucky Fried Chicken stores).² With more and more people incorporate the Internet into their daily life, cultural globalization and its associated phenomena are bound to develop and explode. The ratio of foreign culture to domestic culture has shifted in favor of the former across a range of cultural products including dress, mores, and food. The trend has been especially prevalent in media: the overall global market in television programming, recorded music, feature film production, news broadcasting, and book publishing has seen a significant rise in foreign influences, ownership, and iconography. Consequently, hybridization and homogenization of mass cultural consumption is rising, particularly among the young in the West, East Asia, and Latin America.³

Keywords: China, cultural icon, Zhongshan suit, blue-and-white porcelain

The Historical Status of China's Cultural Power

Once a massive culture power, China saw its soft power ebb for centuries. Along with the miraculous economic growth achieved since it adopted reform and open-door policy in the late 1970s, its cultural power gradually returned in force at the end of the 20th century and continues to grow in the 21st century. One typical example is Chinese writer Mo Yan, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in the year 2012.

Historically, China had been a major country for cultural export - language, festivals, cuisine, etc. - not only to neighboring Asian countries, but also to certain countries as far as in Europe and Middle East. The country's relations with its periphery and non-Chinese peoples have been underpinned by Sino-centrism and a long-held assumption of Chinese superiority.⁴

Despite the fact that China holds the world's longest tradition of continuous statehood and the Chinese have long professed their cultural superiority to other peoples, it is surprisingly difficult to precisely define Chinese culture. However, some cultural mores are obviously "Chinese" - a continuum which has changed over time, but certainly includes Confucian values such as veneration of elders and ancestors, filial piety, respect for authority, the importance of education, a strong work ethic, etc.

For much of its history, China was the strongest country in the world in terms of economical, military, and cultural power. Even for several occasions when ancient China was under invasions and occupations, the invaders were inevitably converted to Chinese culture. They began speaking Chinese, eating Chinese food, dressing in Chinese styles, and finally adopting Chinese cultural patterns in their totality. This process also worked outwards. As early as the Han Dynasty some 2,000 years ago, Chang'an, then China's capital city, was one of the two largest cities in the ancient world - Rome being the other. During this period, lasting commercial and cultural contacts were established with central Asia, southwestern Asia, and even the Roman Empire. The Silk Road was a global artery linking the various empires in the ancient world and for centuries Chinese goods (silks, porcelains, ironware, etc.) as well as innovations (e.g., gunpowder, the compass, and wheelbarrow) moved across Eurasia, along with Chinese culture carried by its merchants.

In the mid-19th century, China's role as a cultural lodestone was disrupted. This downturn in the country's cultural attractiveness abroad continued into the late 20th century. The inability of ruling elite of last decades of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912) to ward off foreign challenges resulted in the loss of faith in China's Confucian worldview. The country's semi-colonial status during the so-called "100 years of humiliation" (from 1840 to 1949) severely damaged its spiritual life, confidence in dealing with the outside world, and ability to tap indigenous symbolic resources.⁵

During the Maoist era, the internal assault on China's traditional culture culminated in the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), which saw the nationwide attack on the "Four Olds" - old ideas, old culture, old customs, and old habits. This ill-conceived and ultimately disastrous national movement was not just a campaign against outdated ideas and a few intellectuals, but a wholesale attack on the educated elite and traditional culture.⁶ China became a dangerously xenophobic and anti-traditional place. China's cultural power - measured in terms of how a country is viewed, respected, and ultimately imitated - declined sharply during this period of self imposed isolation from the outside world.⁷

Since China adopted "open-door" policy in the 1980s, its culture started to boom once again. Traditional cultural products like Cheongsam (Qipao), acupuncture, feng shui, martial arts, herbal medicine, regional cuisines, literature, and religious practices have enjoyed renewed popularity around the world. China's modern arts, cinema, pop music, acrobatics, and dance were also finding new audiences in the Pacific Rim, and increasingly in the West as well. Chinese motion pictures such as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, *Hero*, and *House of Flying Daggers* exploded on the international box office, exposing new generations of non-Chinese to modern and traditional Chinese culture. Western fashion designers like Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Cardin are among the first to incorporate traditional Chinese fashion icons in their design collections, which gained great success.

However, in present days when cultural icons become an object for consumption, the contribution of cultural industry to GDP is less than 3% for China - much lower than that of developed countries like US, UK, or Japan.⁸ Although China is rich in cultural resources, it is not strong in cultural industry.

In an increasingly materialized and dollar-driven society, human being's desire for, dependence on and infatuation with cultural icons have grown as strong as never before. This stimulates a huge potential for consumption of commodities rich in cultural icons. Luckily, with Chinese government's strong policy support as well as the advancement of technology in media communication, Chinese are now trying to nurture the mass consumption culture with China's rich historical heritage, the carrier of which being cultural icons.

The Use of Chinese Cultural Icons in Fashion

Unlike industries such as movie, animation, publishing, in which China is relatively weak or even faces the awkward situation of total westernization, fashion is the one industry that has successfully incorporated Chinese cultural icons and gained world acceptance.

We can categorize cultural icons into visual icons and spiritual icons. Both categories find their adoption in the design of fashion.

Incorporation of spiritual icons in fashion – a case study of Zhongshan Suit

Zhongshan Suit (Chinese Pinyin: zhōng-shān-zhuāng) literally means the uniform of Dr. Sun Zhongshan (also known as Sun Yat-Sen), the revolutionary pioneer of modern China. It is more commonly known in the western world as Mao suit (after Mao Zedong). Dr. Sun Yat-sen introduced the style shortly after the founding of the Republic of China in early 20th century as a form of national dress.

After the end of the Chinese Civil War and the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the suit became widely worn by males and government leaders as a symbol of proletarian unity and an Eastern counterpart to the Western business suit. The name "Mao suit" comes from Chinese leader Mao Zedong's habit of wearing them in public, thus tying the garment closely to him and Chinese communism in general in the Western imagination. Although they fell into disuse among the general public in the 1990s due to increasing western influences, they are commonly worn by Chinese leaders during important state ceremonies and functions.

In early 20th century, the style of dress worn in China was based on Manchu dress (Qipao and Changshan), which had been imposed by the Qing Dynasty as a form of social control. The majority Han Chinese revolutionaries who overthrew the Qing were fueled by failure of the Qing to defend China against western imperialists and the low standing of the Qing in terms of technology and science compared to the West. Older forms of Chinese dress were becoming unpopular among the elite.

Dr. Sun Zhongshan was personally involved in the design of Zhongshan Suit, providing inputs based on his life experience in Japan. The Japanese cadet uniform, itself the imitation of western military uniform, became a basis of Zhongshan Suit.

There are certain structural features in Zhongshan Suit that are embodiment of Chinese spiritual icons (Figure 1).

It has four patch pockets, which represents four dimensions of the Chinese nation: courtesy, justice, honesty, and sense of honor;

There are five buttons on the front placket, which represents the five independent rights stated in the constitution: administration, legislation, judiciary, examination and supervision;

There are three buttons on each of the sleeve placket, which represents Three Principles of the People – the democratic revolution creed proposed by Dr. Sun Zhongshan: Principles of Nationalism, Principles of Democracy, and Principles of People's Livelihood.

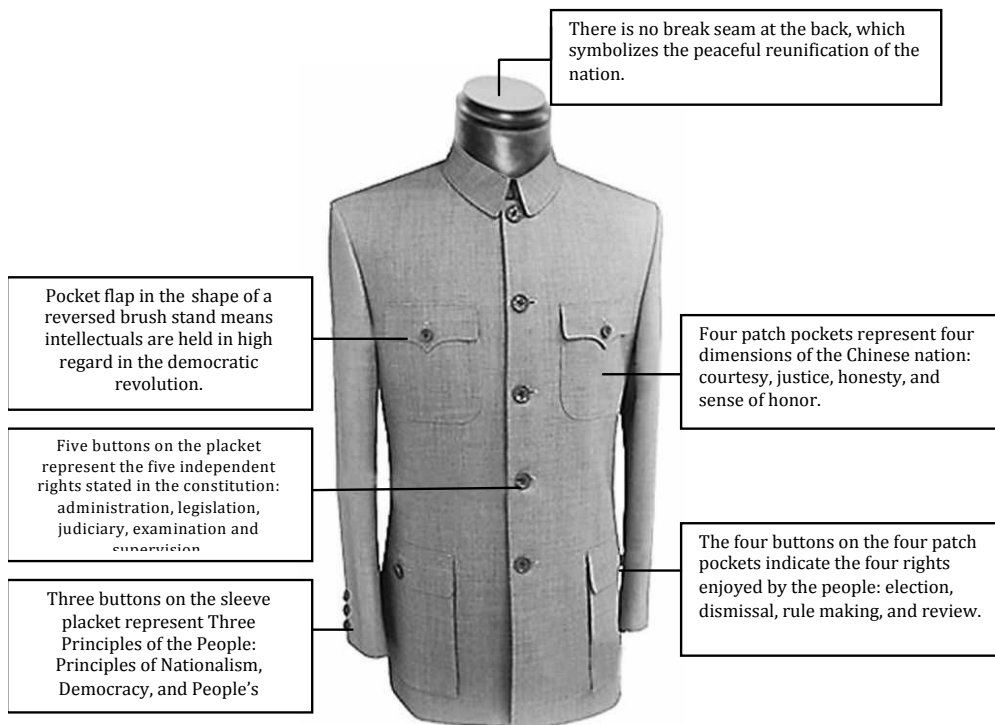


Figure 1

There is no break seam at the back, which symbolizes the peaceful reunification of the nation.

The pocket flap of the two upper pockets is in the shape of a reversed brush stand, which means intellectuals are held in high regard in the democratic revolution.

The four buttons on the four patch pockets indicate the four rights enjoyed by the people: election, dismissal, rule making, and review.⁹

The traditional Chinese people are reserved, introverted and even restrained. This is reflected in the dress they wear. The structure of Zhongshan Suit reflects the notion of symmetry, balance and harmony. The tightly buttoned turndown stand collar fully exemplifies the Chinese national character of being careful and cautious. Also, unlike western suit that can be worn open and unbuttoned, Zhongshan Suit must be worn with all the buttons on – again indicating the sober and steady-going nature of Chinese people.

With China's economical revival in recent years, there is a resurgence of national confidence among young people. Chinese designers attempt to meet their needs by modifying Zhongshan Suit so that it is more modern, comfortable and cool. Figure 2 shows a piece of modified Zhongshan Suit with a chic look. It eliminates the two upper pockets and alters the two bottom ones from patch pockets to insert pockets, thus making the whole outfits lighter and concise. The turndown collar is changed into stand collar, enhancing the overall aesthetic value of the suit.

Mr. Mo Yan, Chinese novelist and short story writer, won 2012 Nobel Prize for Literature. He was the 109th recipient of the award and the first ever resident of mainland China to receive it. This is a significant event for China. Before Mr. Mo Yan set off to Sweden to receive the prize, there were many speculations on what he was going to wear. Some people even designed five outfits for him and posted the photoshopped image on the web. The answer to the riddle was unveiled on December 7th, 2012: Mr. Mo Yan delivered speech at the awarding ceremony in the Swedish Academy in a piece of modified Zhongshan Suit.



Figure 2

Incorporation of visual icons in fashion – a case study of blue-and-white porcelain

Both Chinese and western designers make use of the visual form of traditional Chinese cultural icons in designing fashion, such as blue-and-white porcelain, water ink painting, the motif of dragon, fancy mandarin button (i.e. cord-twisted button).

Blue-and-white porcelain (Chinese Pinyin: qīng-huǒ) literally means “porcelain with blue patterns”. It refers to white porcelain decorated under the glaze with a blue pigment, usually cobalt oxide. The decoration is commonly applied by hand, stenciling or transfer-printing, though other methods of application have also been used.

The technique of cobalt blue decorations seems to have come from the Middle-East in the 9th century through decorative experimentation on white ware. Cobalt blue pigments were excavated from local mines in central Iran, and were then exported as raw material to China.¹⁰

The earliest blue-and-white porcelain found today was made in Tang dynasty (618-910 AD). The technically more sophisticated blue-and-white porcelain appeared during the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368AD). In the early 14th century, mass production of fine, translucent, blue-and-white porcelain started at Jingdezhen, sometimes called the porcelain capital of China. This development was due to the combination of Chinese techniques and Islamic trade. Figure 3 shows a blue-and-white porcelain plate with a depiction of Chinese dragon from the late Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 AD), presently kept at Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, Berlin-Dahlem.

Blue-and-white porcelain made at Jingdezhen probably reached the height of its technical excellence during the reign of Kangxi Emperor (reigned 1661 to 1722 AD) of the Qing Dynasty. During the 17th century, numerous blue and white pieces were made as export porcelain for the European markets. European symbols and scenes coexisted with Chinese scenes for these objects.

For centuries, with its unique color and pattern (or motif), blue-and-white porcelain is looked upon as treasure of China and symbol of elegance and purity. Fashion designers, both from within and outside China, love to use blue-and-white porcelain as design element in their collections.

During the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, the girl staff working at the National Swimming Center and all other water sports venues wore dresses with embroidered blue-and-white patterns. This is a great opportunity to showcase to the world the charm of tradition Chinese visual icons.

Ms. Guo Pei, the famous Chinese fashion designer who owns and operates Rose Studio, an haute couture house, designed a dress named “Blue-and-white Ancient Charm” for Chinese film star Fan Bingbing. The patterns on the whole dress are a complete copy of a blue-and-white porcelain vase from the Song dynasty (960-1279 AD). With blue-and-white entwined branches as the base motif, there are patterns of dragon, kylin, phoenix and magpie - all signifying good luck in Chinese culture. The graceful and restrained characteristics of blue-and-white porcelain match well with Fan Bingbing’s fair skin and classical yet seductively charming features. Beads, sequins, and diamonds are inlaid all over the dress, showing magnificence side by side with composedness. Ms. Guo Pei also designed three dresses for another famous Chinese actress Li Bingbing to wear at the 2010 Venice Film Festival. And the theme of one of the three dresses is “blue-and-white porcelain”.¹¹

Blue-and-white porcelain is also a favorite design inspiration for many western designers in recent years. Italian fashion designer Robert Cavalli is one of those designers who adopt the element of blue-and-white porcelain most successfully. In his 2005 fall/winter collection, there is one floor-length long dress with fitted waist and mermaid tail. The dress is very sexy and western in that it is bare-shouldered with tight laced breasts. However, it conveys a sense of oriental calmness through the blue-and-white porcelain patterns that cover the whole dress. In 2008, Robert Cavalli designed an above-the-knee short dress. Totally hand-made, the dress uses gold and silver thread, sequins and crystal. With solid dark blue color as the back panel, the front panel uses typical Chinese blue-and-white porcelain pattern of dragon.¹²

Dior’s 2009 spring/summer collection of white-and-blue porcelain is another example of perfect combination of western and eastern elements. With the typical western “X” silhouette reminiscent of the French



Figure 3
(Source: www.wikipedia.com,
Courtesy: Gryffindor)

court in high Baroque period, the dresses are adorned with Chinese white-and-blue porcelain patterns at the bust line, waist, hemline and the lining. They project an overall image of purity, gracefulness and sumptuousness.¹³

Conclusion

As an important part of people's daily life, fashion has profound relationship with culture legacy. Chinese designers are lucky, because with China's 5000 years of civilization, they have a rich cultural mine to dig from; yet from another perspective, they are unlucky, because sometimes they are overburdened with the "sacred" task of promoting Chinese culture at the cost of sacrificing the aesthetic value of their design work.

On the other hand, there are already numerous successful examples of western designers using Chinese cultural icons as their design inspiration and tool of gaining acceptance and recognition of Chinese consumers as well as the world market. With the rise of China as an important economic power in the world, its soft power and cultural influence are also strengthening. Chinese culture icons have found their application in many sectors of the creative industry. China chic has been in place for several years and will continue to develop within the foreseeable future.

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Education

V.

- Use of icons in the pedagogy of Business, Marketing, and Pop Culture

The power of aam aadmi (celebrating the common man)

Ambika Magotra Pearl Academy of Fashion, India

Assessment of factors affecting student creativity in Fashion and Textile Design

Dr. Katherine Carroll & Nancy Powell North Carolina State University, United States

The Fabric in our Connected Lives:

Utilizing Social Media to Reach New Commodity Markets

Nancy Powell & Fay Gibson North Carolina State University, United States

Use of Icons in Technical Education

Suranjan Lahiri Pearl Academy of Fashion, India

Iconic Fashion Education of Tomorrow

Suzanne van Rooij & Sander Schellens Amsterdam Fashion Institute, Netherlands

The power of aam aadmi (celebrating the common man)

Ambika Magotra Pearl Academy of Fashion, India



Ambika Magotra

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Abstract

Transitions in Indian socio-cultural and economic consciousness have thrown open doors in lifestyle and entertainment industry to appeal the common man. In one hand globalization is merging our borders; on other hand cultures are losing their uniqueness. Emerging common man of India is a potent power that will see a lot of focus.

The demographic pyramid is flattening in the middle for India. The iconic common man is branching from our euphoria about nation doing well. There is a strong nationalistic pride developing, when you see growth that is happening in India.

Projection of real issues of real people in real life shown in media is displaying contemporary India, Today reality is currency, we are willing to accept what is real in life against anything larger than life. We are consuming reality rather than escaping it. Indian sensibilities are increasingly getting defined individually rather than collective. For us democratization is becoming popular...ordinary is interesting.

Indian fashion design scene is passing through a paradigm shift. Young, upcoming designers are projecting uncompromising attitude, which ensures that they are not blindly dictated by market trends. They are carrying forward the Indian styling and traditions of handcrafted pieces that are at once unique. They have a willingness to incorporate the effortless style of the locals and making them real trend-setters of our time, which is central to the business of fashion.

Given the current scenario, I propose to carefully study and archive visuals of people with effortless and non-conformist style, existing on Indian street, who are not usually associated with fashion. I wish to document individuality that's intrinsic to street style by spotting unusual details. I want to draw inspiration from common men/women across class caste & profession. I will be interviewing young and evolving designers, who morph street into a high street- Pop fashion look. Does the wearer (commercial fashion) matters more? Is there any modern and contemporary Indian street fashion look!!

Introduction

India and her people, history has shown, have always been subject to rule. Throughout history, the Indian people have only been ruled until only recently. Keeping in mind our history like that, in an ideal sense, we, as a people should be unified in a determined way, ready to take on the world. But, the effect, unfortunately, has been converse. It's as though we have lost confidence in ourselves, our traditions, roots and culture and the idea of 'the grass is always greener on the other side' has embedded itself into our psyches - the idea that 'they're better, so they rule us' and that 'better only means being one of them' is rooted deeply at the back of our minds somewhere. Those who examine the reasons for this psyche also claim Globalisation (also termed Americanization and the *modern way of Imperialism* by critiques) as one of the reasons for it - 'If they're ruling markets/ramps all over the world, they must be better than us and we must be like them'. That; that psyche.

All that proves why values, explicit values only, from the West are making way into our lifestyles - so much so that while European languages are held in high public esteem, our own language is treated with disrespect many a time. That's just one example. And that's not all. That very psyche has given way to a sense of exclusivity in our social fabric. We repel our poor brothers and sisters. We despise the poor, not poverty. There is another dimension to this altogether and that's that throughout our pursuit of the luxuries of the

Keywords:

non-conformist, high street fashion, trickle up theory, Pero, Aneeth Arora, common man, pop culture, contemporary fashion, preserving, emerging middle class, self belief, Nida Mahmood, bloggers, trickle up.

West, we have never really broken free from our cultural influences for they were/are too strong to be shed off completely.

Clearly, the problem that we have as a people is one – identity crisis.

What I propose is not isolationism from the rest of the world, partly because the ideas from the West and the world in general are vital to us for scientific and social purposes and partly because globalization is pretty much an irreversible process.

But the question I wish to ask is why while goodies and merchandise themed on the Union Jack and the American flag run into millions, there are barely any that I can count themed on The Tiranga in an Indian mall?

But of late, this issue has received some light, some thought. Entrepreneurs and fashion students alike have come to realize the potential of Indian designs, of pattern, of the Indian people as a whole. And the idea that seems to drive this is to take what we have at home and popularize it. And the reason behind valuing what we have at home is the knowledge that India is welcoming industrialization and economic growth with open arms which threatens our traditions, leading to our cultural influence of our way of life fading.

Entrepreneurs and fashion students have realized the importance of deriving inspiration from home from its own common man's lifestyle and value what we have – accepted it.

The Demographic, Economic & Social Change

Throughout India's history, the vast majority of its people have lived in desperate poverty. As recently as 1985, more than 90 percent of Indians lived on less than a dollar a day. Yet India is poised to undergo a remarkable transformation. New research from the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) shows that within a generation, the country will become a nation of upwardly mobile middle-class households, consuming goods ranging from high-end cars to designer clothing. In two decades the country will surpass Germany as the world's fifth largest consumer market.

They will enjoy a lifestyle that most of the world would recognize as middle class and typically own a television, a refrigerator, a mobile phone and perhaps even a scooter or a car. Although their budgets are stretched, they scrimp and save for their children's education and their own retirement. This process has been evolving for quite some time now and the positive impacts of this demographic evolution are increasingly visible. This is evident from the fact that the middle class which currently numbers some 50 million people, by 2025 will have expanded dramatically to 583 million people—some 41 percent of the population.

But a new breed of ferociously upwardly mobile Indians is emerging—young graduates of India's top colleges who can command large salaries from Indian and foreign multinationals. Their tastes are indistinguishable from those of prosperous young Westerners—many own high-end luxury cars, wear designer clothes, employ maids and full-time cooks, and regularly vacation abroad. By 2025, there will be 9.5 million Indians in this class and their spending power will hit 14.1 trillion rupees—20 percent of total Indian consumption.

It's this *crème de la crème* of the Indian population, those who enjoy that sort of lifestyle in a country which is fighting to break free from the vicious cycle of poverty, which has, in a way, instilled a sort of dream in the common man - the dream which propels the common man to work hard and to live a good life. It is this elites and media projection which has inspired the common man and is pushing it hard to fulfill their aspirations.

As the seismic wave of income growth rolls across Indian society, the character of consumption will change dramatically over the next 20 years. A huge shift is underway from spending on necessities such as food and clothing to choice-based spending on categories such as household appliances and restaurants. Households that can afford discretionary consumption will grow from 8 million today to 94 million by 2025.

Ordinary is Interesting – Is Fashion

Long-established spending attitudes are already changing rapidly. Branded clothes are becoming de rigueur for the wealthiest Indians—Christian Dior, Louis Vuitton and Tommy Hilfiger already have a presence in the country. Gucci, Armani and Versace are on their way. For generations, Indians did their daily shopping at fresh-food markets and regarded packaged foods as “stale.” However, just like their Western counterparts, a new generation of busy urban Indians is starting to appreciate the convenience and choice offered by packaged foods. Likewise, many Indians have traditionally viewed gold jewelry as a safer way to save than banks, but young Indians today are likely to see jewelry as a fashion statement, not a savings plan. They are also increasingly comfortable using credit cards —the share of Indians who carry plastic has quadrupled since 2001.

India is in the midst of a unique identity revolution. After years of consuming “imported products,” the youth here is rising to define their own needs and wants. They still want the western “appeal” but desire the Indian “look.” This concept is *Indianization*.

The story of India as a consumer-centric market started in the early 90's when its doors were thrown open for the big names to come and compete for a share of the 1.1 billion strong consumer pie. From Kellogg to Mercedes to Levi-Strauss, most big name brands with enviable success stories in the west, found themselves unable to repeat that legion here.

The Two Way Mechanism

As more and more companies stumbled, a new theme spear-headed by MTV India emerged. They introduced a new format where their 3-word mantra was “Indianize, Humanize, Humorize.” The amalgamation of national meanings, symbols and practices all converted into a humorous, graphical package delivered an instant connect with the Indian consumer. This was satellite television but other companies followed suit. The impact of this trend has been felt across industries. Titan, one of the most popular brands of watches in India took a cue and came up with the Fasttrack collection. It was a spin on quirky Indian behaviors. Ronald MacDonald could be seen saying “Namaste” outside every Macdonald outlet and Peter Parker reincarnated himself as Pavitr Prabhakar.

Products are finding different ways to connect with the Indianness. Colors have always resonated in the everyday life of Indians. Samsung used this approach to create their refrigerators in a line of colors that instantly saw it disappear off the shelves. Whirlpool did the same with air conditioners. Scooty, a popular 2-wheeler brand came out with a selection of 99 colors.

Indianization is perhaps having the biggest impact in the Fashion space. This concept has now blurred the lines between the traditionally distinct western wear and Indian wear. From high fashion to kitsch, the use of everyday Indianness is everywhere to be seen.

As the look and feel of products has undergone a radical change, Innovation, business and operational models too would need a closer look to present itself in a way it's wanted by the average Indian. Whether it's e-commerce, or traditional retail, whether it's healthcare or telecom, it is imperative to Indianize for any chance of success.

P.S: As I write this, India is on the verge of opening FDI (foreign direct investment) in the retail sector. Here is an opportunity for the mother of all retail outlets, Walmart to take a stab at Indianization!

So while the common man dreams of a better life, firms and powerful brand names dream of more profit. This works as a two way efficient mechanism and takes us back to the most basic principle of Economics, highlighted by Adam Smiths, that in the pursuit of the separate interests of these parties, the whole society grows.

Smart companies recognize that old consumer habits die hard. For generations, rural Indian families have either made their own clothes from bolts of cloth or had the local tailor make their garments relatively cheaply. Many remain suspicious of ready-to-wear clothes. Arvind Mills, India's leading denim manufacturer, overcame these misgivings by offering a “ready to stitch” jeans kit to local village tailors. It also

distributed sewing-machine attachments for stitching the heavy denim and trained the tailors to use the kits. Within two months, more than a million of these Ruf 'n Tuf kits were sold.

The lesson for Indians with global ambition is that success will not come from merely imitating the successful but from identifying and nurturing their own distinctive capabilities.

Trickle Up Theory & identification of subcultures

There are many different theories of where fashions are inspired by and come from within society. The -trickle up theory is based on the movement of fashions from lower income families, blue-collar workers, and street styles. In trickle up theory these subcultures are the base of where these fashions are originated, and then they trickle up to the higher class subcultures. “Examples of the trickle-up theory of fashion distribution include a very early proponent, Chanel, who believed fashion.

Let me tell you a little about the irony of fashion here. In the way it's taken, thought of is usually with a sense of exclusivity, a novelty, something unapproachable and for the elite. In actuality, however, we, those who work with and in the world of fashion, understand, that fashion really is something which unites – which is supposed to make us one. It's very basic in nature.

Now that socio-economic changes in the country are taking place, the core 'Indian' of things is fading – being washed away.

What we do when we celebrate the common man, is take both those meanings of fashion and couple them together. As far as the latter (meaning) is concerned, it's Indian things that bring us together and as far as the former is concerned; since the core 'Indian' of things is fading away slowly from clothes to grocery shopping to biscuits, it's something that's drifting away. And as simple psychology suggests, it's the things which move a little further away from our grip that instantly become more valuable.

Which is why entrepreneurs and fashion students want to hold cultural influences back, modify them a bit to make them a tad bit more attractive, personalize them, present them, capture and archive them. They don't want to lose the Indian touch, the essence of India. Indian is now fashionable.

Many of the designs which are based on trickle-up trend starts at the bottom of the social classes and moves its way up to the elite social ideas originated from the streets and then are adopted by couture designers and fashions that came up from the working class and lower income subcultures are based more on being functional, easy –movement, and simple designs.

Most trickle-up trends of the 21st century come from street fashion. Sometimes trickle-up trends may be influenced on the current economic state. Another huge trickle-up example in fashion is the “punk” look which originated with the punk subculture who were wearing leather jackets, chains, boots and so forth. The punk style has grown to become a huge fashion in upper class subcultures. “Vivienne Westwood is often cited as punk's creator, but the complex genesis of punk is also found in England's depressed economic and sociopolitical conditions of the mid-1970s”(Vivienne Westwood 2012). Vivienne Westwood is one of the many designers to grasp onto the punk style and bring the fashion up to the higher class and make luxury punk designs. “The punk look has come to be associated with clothing that has been destroyed, has been put back together, is inside out, is unfinished, or is deteriorating.¹⁰ Punk was an early manifestation of deconstructionist fashion, which is an important component of late twentieth-century postmodern style and continues to be seen in the work of contemporary fashion designers such as Rei Kawakubo and Martin Margiela.” (Vivienne Westwood 2012). These are just a few examples of ways that trickle-up theory is portrayed in our fashion world still today!

The Observers

A few months ago, I stumbled across an interesting Indian blog, Wearabout, that documents Indian street fashion, individual style and the work of 26 year old photographer Manou, who runs it. He started taking photos while studying fashion at NIFT, and founded his street style blog “Wearabout” in February 2010.

Wallpaper dedicates him a special report in “Reborn in India”. He has a good eye for colours and an ability to find something aesthetic in everything. Here are a few images from the blog.

Now while we have certainly spoken of fashion students and entrepreneurs trying to preserve and promote Indian things, let’s not forget that to ‘respond’ to something, there needs to be a concrete observation which is convincing enough to make them believe that a) believe in your culture and its creativity and b) if not archived, we would lose it. Now, who makes these observations? Who are the starters of this discussion, this new pattern of thought? They are writers, photographers and bloggers. They have observed it over time and commented convincingly enough so much so that a response from entrepreneurs and fashion students has come.

Happening Fashion Bloggers

Why does this blogger love to photograph the kind of people that he does....well according to what he puts as 1st person , “I don’t think I’m looking for anything in particular. I guess I just want to make good looking photos that might be socially & culturally relevant. At the same time I’m also taking photos for the sake of personal documentation. Various artists, designers work which I have documented and I appreciate them for being pioneers in proving the fact that India’s common elements could be so inspirational and inspiring...”

After volunteering in a project in Dharamshala Manou’s snaps were spotted by a colleague who opened his eyes to the vibrant and eccentric world of street fashion in Tokyo with Shoichi Aoki’s book ‘FRUITS’. Since then there has been no turning back. ‘Mumbai street adventure with Manou : Guardian’ a short film sharing an insight into the fashion scene by [Wearabout](#) blogger Manou. Why? Because Manou’s streetstyle blog is diverse and democratic, its not just the young pretty things at fashion week that make it into his blog it could just as easily be a street hawker.

Style blogger Manou and his camera travel to different parts of India and visit fashion weeks to capture style. While models, stylists and fashion aficionados are a regular feature on his blog, some of his best pictures are candid shots of people on the streets of Mumbai, hilly terrains of north India or deserts of Rajasthan. Take an extra minute or two to marvel at the happy street children from Mumbai and refined tastes of old men and women from Dharamshala.

Fashion Bombay -In need of some effective style pointers on how to wear the same dress in five different ways? You will find your answers here. Sonu and Jasleen are stylists, fashion writers and accessory designers. So, this is really your one-stop-halt for all things fashion from two very stylish women.

Who inspires your style choices? Glamorous celebrities, your mom’s elegant style, or maybe you have a huge crush on your friend’s wardrobe. Here’s a basketful of fashion blogs that will give you style and [shopping](#) inspiration and keep you clued in to what’s new and happening in the wardrobes of regular girls as well as contemporary fashionistas

Yet another photographer who is world trotter has documented Indian common man’s portraits in his book –‘Facing the streets India’ is a collection of some of the most interesting and memorable portraits that I took on my recent trip to. According to photographer, he believes that these face tell the history of the country – past, present and future and This is India for him...

The majority of Indian fashion and clothing history is influenced by Hindu traditions and lifestyle, though increasingly younger Indians look to the globalized fashion world for cross-cultural styles.

An ode by Indian designers for economic boom and the growing market and self belief in themselves-

Indian designers, along with their loyal subjects are undergoing a re-education of sorts;tapping local treasurers over internationally sourced inspiration.Local kitsch has been this endearing.the sheer diversity India has to offer is second to none,and it is fascinating and exciting to be surrounded by designs inspired

by this rich crazy mix of quirky and unusual influences. It is not only a treat to the visual senses, but an ode to this colourful, rich and vibrant yet a simple nation.

Fashion in India has undergone a makeover over the past few years and one of the designers who epitomises this change is **Nida Mahmood**. Nida's collections are a mixture of classical designs and street culture.

As **Payal Khandwala** called her collection the "Sadhu and the Samurai"

a line of layered, draped and wrapped separates, The colours reflected the theme of the garments, as burnt orange, crimson and ochre played an almost spiritual fashion melody with coffee, charcoal, bronze and indigo. Keeping the silhouettes relaxed.

Yogesh Chaudhary created his distinct individualistic trend by bringing forth a clever mix of Indian and western embellishments, inspirations and retro prints. Block printing, beadwork, digital printing and knitted jacquards highlighted the wonderful line of separates that included skirts, Tees, trousers, jackets, blouses, trenches, saris and even swim wear. Adding on a range of knitted dresses and cardigans, Yogesh ensured that the silhouettes were lean, sexy but trendy. A hint of gold gotta work gave interesting touches to the sari made from the Maheshwari fabric which was given unconventional treatment.

The Indianness of Pe'ro rests in her inspiration is the clothing and dressing styles of local people, which is so effortlessly stylish and trendy, therefore making them real trendsetters of our time. The resulting garments evoke some sense of culture from where it originates. This culture communicates internationally in a way that the wearer looks equally at ease in the streets of Paris or London, as she does here in India. The look is not about an age group or season, it is about a mindset, a willingness to incorporate the effortless style of the locals.

India - an inspiration to many international design houses

Like Gaultier, India has been an inspiration to many international design houses and with time, the country has also carved out a significant spot for itself on the global fashion map.

The renowned designer's use of sari gowns, traditional Indian colours and fabrics is very well stylized with India as main story

And with his spring/summer 2013 menswear collection which was showcased in Paris on Thursday, Gaultier of Hermès proved that his love for India is no fleeting romance.

Dressing up his models in Sikh-styled turbans, teamed with various ensembles such as shorts, blazers, tuxedos, T-shirts and overcoats, Gaultier paid a rich tribute once more to the land of many cultures and colours.

Colourful headwear Urban turban: The French designer says he is always inspired by India

The collection was inspired by the travel theme, presenting a globe-trotting fashionable man who understands the very essence of travelling that is cultivating a bigger understanding and respect for various cultures.

He then reflects the same in his wardrobe and style. Talking about his India connect, Gaultier had said in an interview recently: 'In every collection I have done, there is always an Indian inspiration.'

The designer is known to visit the country quite often and owns a vast library of intensely coloured textile swatches here since his first visit to Kolkata in West Bengal and Puri in Orissa, in the 1970s.

Here is a lovely image from Vogue's April 1994 issue of supermodel Christy Turlington demonstrating yoga pose in Gaultier couture.

Karl Lagerfeld did it, Jean Paul Gaultier indulged in it and Diane Von Furstenberg flaunted it with élan. All these designers have been inspired by India in their collections, and one of fashion's favourite labels, Marchesa is the latest to join the stylish list.

At the recently-concluded New York Fashion Week, designer duo Georgina Chapman and Keren Craig of the label showcased their collection, which was vividly desi in its look and incorporated colours, cuts and

silhouettes inspired by India. From salwar kameez to contemporized lehengas and lacy saris — the show was complete with models wearing gilded makeup and ankle.

“It seems Marchesa has been inspired by the 90’s desi fashion that was seen on the Indian runways. Emilio Pucci also did something similar, influenced by the country,” says designer Rina Dhaka.

As a promoter of fashion and an educator, I have always tried to transfer my vision to my students and am glad that they understand this and are looking towards their own inspiration and celebrating the power of it. I love that desi design is evolving in India, in sync with Indian aesthetics.

An assignment given to L1 students of fashion was based on the following- Fashion and beyond; where students had to spot the local trend, interestingly they tried to stay different from the mainstream trends they did not necessarily follow what’s “in” but the often put together outfits that reflected their personality and mood. According to their understanding on fashion and culture most major youth sub culture have had unassociated street fashion so who knows some of these “Gali Glamour” now could be well spotted on the catwalk this season.

Final Year project inspired by this similar ideology and philosophy – ‘Believe in You and I’ of getting inspired from common man’s environment -

Concept Note

Inspired from the chaotic environment, madness and passion of Sufi believers, the women’s wear diffusion line is for the free-spirited, Indian at heart globe trotter who is attracted to different religious beliefs, adapts it with an open mind and is a fashionista.

Indianess has been contemporized with the use of soft, fluid fabrics, a bright and vivid colour palette and quirky detailing. Hand painted fabric artworks have been converted to digital prints keeping design service for the mass market. And voila! The flavor is Indian. The feel unencumbered and relaxed. The look Kitsch. The collection, not only about fashion but a way of life-simple yet stylish.

“India has become a favourite inspiration among national and international designers because of the major economic boom and the growing market. **The common man is the power man**

Through this paper, I have wished to present this line of thought – that the common man is not as common as we sometimes may presume (because of the ‘common’ bit to the name). He is in fact, quite the contrary. The common man is the power man – not only because he is the key component to economic and social structures and changes but also fashion - which is why it makes perfect sense to celebrate him and his contribution to these three spheres (society, fashion & economics) of human life -The Indian Common Man, in particular, for it is this one who is experiencing, what I would like to call, and find interesting to observe, examine and comment on, the coming of age.

The youth of India is well aware and strong and is ready to take the world head on – and approaching fashion in an unconventional but Indian manner is the display of that. They have realized that mindlessly, incorrectly and inadequately aping the West is not the way to go; what is – is believing in your own designs influenced by your culture, your history.

As incomes rise, the middle class expands, economic and social changes come in place, there is one thing for sure too – confidence - the pride in presenting things from home. Not only is this an interesting thing to observe and talk about – it is truly a delight to be able to see and experience that this is in fact a redefining period in history for a country, for its people. And finally I can say that the real, pop and young India has arrived which is there to stay as an inspiration for many.

Hybridization...recontextualization....decoconstruction....glocalization... what is Indian -ness

McLuhan’s theory of a ‘Global Village’, which he first spoke about in the 1960s, resonates in today’s society and specifically in the instantaneous and ubiquitous dissemination of fashion through various mediums,

the most pervasive perhaps being the internet with blogs showcasing street fashion and websites like style.com delivering images of fashion shows from around the world as soon as they occur. As opposed to the earlier handful of fashion weeks that would occur in the major 'fashion capitals' of the world, now cities across the globe and here in INDIA hold fashion weeks showcasing and publicising their designers on a global scale.

With communication, the dissemination of fashion occurs across the globe, leading to people even in the remotest corners of the world having an awareness of what is 'current' in fashion. But what occurs is the 'glocalisation' of these ideas that are seen across the globe. Trends that may arise anywhere in the world are absorbed and translated by people around the world, giving these homogeneous commodities a different twist. Films made in the 20th century depicting the future always showed the people of the 21st century dressed uniformly, living without cultural and national borders but instead integrated into a united universal system. Fast forward to the 21st century, we see now that this idea is not so far from the truth with the big global brands mass producing fashion to meet the demands of a mass consuming society. But even so, people across the globe, and certainly more so in less west-influenced countries, retain certain elements of their heritage and culture as can be seen at the non-western Fashion weeks where one's own heritage becomes a point of departure for a lot of designers. Global fashion chains which populate most high streets globally have been compared to fast food chains and some theorists believe that with globalization has come a global sameness where the individualities of different cultures has disappeared.

Fashion here in India also has begun to resemble fast food: fast, disposable, easy, unthreatening, entertaining, and largely homogeneous'. It is quite true, that fashion from the west is pushed onto the east, leading to a westernised mode of dressing taking over the pre existing ethnic and traditional fashions of our country. We also need to know that Fashion is no longer a western, hierarchical system that defines what good taste is and how it can be imitated. Critically reflecting on how Indian people absorb these global commodities into their own cultures and redefine them.

India a country of infinite opportunities has infinite resources of it's own, which if put to good use can do miracles for its development. It is land of diverse cultures, religions, and traditions , an unmatched history and deep rooted belief system. Local resources, raw material, cheap labour and other resources required for manufacturing are available in abundance. Each geographical pocket has a different story to tell in terms of social cultural dynamics, materials available and their significance and forms and shapes.

A peep into past...

Clothing of commoners played a large role in the nationalist movement, as it has in numerous other revolutions throughout history. During the Indian freedom struggle, laws were passed that the British could not wear Indian clothes in public, and a lot of Indians reverted to wearing their national garb, rejecting that of their colonisers, thus making a strong political statement. The colonisation of India and other countries by the British lead to the exposure of these cultures to the English sartorial aesthetic and many people adopted their way of dressing. But it wasn't just the colonised that adopted the dress of their colonisers, but the colonisers too adopted clothing from their colonies .Two important examples of traditional Indian wear (there are several others as well) adopted by the British and which are till today an integral part of the fashion lexicon, reproduced time and again are the Nehru Jacket and Jodhpurs. The Nehru Jacket, which was popularised by the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru was initially made from *Khadi* in the style of the Hindu service elite. The second item of clothing is the Jodhpur trouser, which has its origins in the ancient style of Indian trouser called the *Churidar*. They were adopted and altered by British Polo players at the time, as a form of breeches and this British version was soon being produced. Both these garments have been re worked by designers across the globe and can be seen incorporated into women's as well as men's fashion. They are still prevalent and can be seen across the globe, on the runways of the worlds best designers and mass-produced and sold on every high street.

Postmodernism of sorts...

Postmodernism in fashion is all around us, from eclecticism, to pastiche, to parody and deconstruction—designers are always using the influence of postmodernism in their collections. Constantly looking forward to the future of fashion but drawing from its past. Are Indian Designers absorbing it and applying to be innovative in their outcome. To get a wider and better view we need to understand how Japanese got it there to the fashion pinnacle in the west.

Magical Japanese fashion impact...

In the 1980s, the influence of Japanese designers came into play. A small Japanese invasion appeared on Paris Fashion scene. When Rei Kawakubo and Yohji Yamamoto gave their first Paris show in 1981, it caused a fashion revolution. They became the first non-western designers to be included in the official fashion world. The success of Japanese fashion in the 1980s increased the tension between, on the one hand, the international demand for non-western Otherness and on the other, Japanese designers' ability to innovate in a medium that no longer can be adequately named Western. These designers were successful because they broke all the conventional ideas of beauty and they brought a new perspective to how fashion would be viewed. For them, the textile was key and they respected, and continue to respect the integral aspects of the textiles. These designers played with deconstruction in their designs. A famous example of this is the Comme des Garçons sweater/cape with holes in it made in 1982— a protest against the perfection of sleek, machine made knitwear. The fact that the sweater has no fixed form stems from the method of construction of Japanese garments, namely the Kimono. The new approaches to fashion, brought by these Japanese designers presented ultramodern garments which had been constructed based on ancient Japanese techniques and principles but using technologically advanced methods. The powerful emergence of these Japanese designers changed the norms of western fashion. Today when we look at deconstruction in fashion, it is used more as an aesthetic. Designers today have instead interpreted this look as decorative as opposed to an integral part of the construction of the clothes. This inherently Japanese design aesthetic has had an influence on western designers and the last twenty years have shown how much Yohji Yamamoto, Comme des Garçons and Issey Miyake have influenced a new generation of designers like Martin Margiela, Viktor & Rolf and Hussein Chalayan. Through this example we see that there is no central dominant culture propagating the homogeneity of global commodities, but there exists the potential of various cultures to trickle up and down from multiple directions.

Finding powerful Indian-ness...

Mostly through semester we have been coming back to the topic of Indianess, and trying to understand it through concepts such as orientalism, simulacrum, essentialism, glocalization, and through processes of commercialization and transnationalism. These concepts have been useful for us in attempting to understand what Indian Pop Culture is all about. I don't think we, as a class, have pinpointed the perfect answer for what Indian-ness is, in and of itself, as well as its

Portrayal in Indian cultural/economic products. I argue that Indian products are being consumed by a heterogeneous audience, and in a time of transnationalism, has created new craze and fan following that engage with Indian traditional and ethnic products despite it not being our own ethnic/national identity.

All in all, perhaps Indian-ness is a hybrid between a perceived Indian essence, that perhaps doesn't exist or is a simulacrum of a traditional "original" essence once known, and a commercially created product to be exploited by those who hold the means of production, within India but mainly outside. Thus Indian-ness is a constant victim of being essentialized and exoticized for capitalistic gain.

Innovations in Indian fashion...

Indian young designers are ready to experiment to innovate. A Bangalore based designer creates with a bit of sarcastic humour," she got different tailors in the city to stitch white kurtas for her to work on; each

dress bears the signatures of those tailors, like designer labels. The show consists of multi-media installations based on that shoot.

Elena- Renee Pereira

Embryonic modernism in Indian silhouette...How does Indian designer look at silhouette?

"I always come across the traditional clothing that people in villages wear — those little angarakhas, even the simple bandi that they wear with the pocket. They look so comfortable with what they're wearing and I think they are the best trendsetters. Since I hadn't travelled much abroad and now I do, I see how people wear clothes," says Aneeth. "How someone wears one shirt on top of another, or tucks in one half of it... I also look at Scandinavian clothing. Like my textiles, I do draw a lot from traditional clothing — in India and the world over."

Aneeth creates wonderful clothing, utilizing indigenous knowledge of ancient textile and clothing traditions of India. 'péro' means 'to wear' in Marwari which is the local language of Rajasthan. Most garments are inspired by the local dressing styles from the remotest areas. 'péro' recreates and adapts these styles for the modern consumer who loves the aesthetic, but also the ease, comfort and pleasure provided by the simple shapes. The textiles are handmade in various parts of India and each collection incorporates at least five traditional techniques from the country, for example block prints from Rajasthan, Jamdani from West Bengal, woven textiles from Maheshwar, Khadi from Calcutta. Each piece is hand crafted and passes through the hands of at least 5 to 12 crafts people. The result is a collection of amazing pieces with incredible hand feel, stunning details and absolutely delicious look. They are like art, or museum pieces in which a child can have a normal life and feel comfortable. I have to say that it was love at first sight, and confirmation of the feeling when I saw some pieces left from the former collection at the store Few and Far in London. A brand that both Rei Kawakubo and Dries Van Noten would love...

Seeing Indian-ness within Indians...

So this is one way of seeing it, however, if we look to Indians within India, perhaps we have a different story to tell.

Hybridization...

"An unconventional Union" Rushmika Banerjee L4 Pearl Academy

Final year students work where she is proudly working on principle of hybridization...

"For East is East. And West is west. And never the 'twain shall meet" -Mark Twain

The culture divide in the 19th century India ruled by the British Raj, created boundaries and segregated people. Racism, bigotry and prejudice drove these two civilizations apart, but they have met and mingled in the past.

The first generation of the British administration was profoundly affected by the Mughal culture, marrying locals, embracing the lifestyle and essentially fusing cultures. The golden era of the nineteenth century when civilizations did not clash, a period forgotten about, and a period which mixed- had a mutual exploration of cultures forming a cultural hybrid.

The range explores the language of clothes to emphasize on the cultural intermingling that defines both eastern and western cultures, women dressed in hybrid outfits fusing elements from both the Victorian era and native Indian draping styles. A dynamic mix of East-meets-west fashion, the designs draw elements from the strong, commanding and power.

Indian young upcoming designers are kind of starting to set in deconstruction, breaking rules, breaking boundaries and breaking moulds. They are getting exposed to infinite ideologies and looks and above all a gut to blend elements that are unthought-of and have an unconventional approach. The varied design ideologies which are getting mixed with Indian flavor are bring in shock elements by a great mix of different cultures and societies and finding how similar they have been in centuries but still not connected yet.

Maybe there is something “authentic” and “iconic” about our Indian-ness, and it exist in immediate environment ,at least some would hope so, otherwise we are doomed to thinking that Indian-ness in and of itself cannot exist (which it may not, I mean we are living in a world that is so inter-connected that perhaps nothing is authentic). Who knows?but I strongly feel yes Indian-ness does exit and what we need is an eye for spotting elements which are so authentic to our people and culture overall .Inspirations in abundance are dynamically prevalent in our environment all over....India is gearing up for street fashion and unconventional looks...maybe we need more trend spotters and a serious fashion forecasting agencies. I think above all is required lot of love and liking for own culture and people who move around on the Indian streets carrying interesting fashion details. We as fashion faculty need to train students to spot more of trends ,need to develop more exercises to train their eye for what is happening around them and on the streets and enjoy it morphing it by either hybridization, re-contextualizing, deconstruction and many more such theories...and giving them space to marry different ideologies with ease...

We are now living in a globalised world where we are a part of a culture that absorbs from all over the world, hybridises and makes it its own. The theories of glocalisation and hybridisation are ever present. Despite the overarching homogeneity of global commodities consumed world wide, people still hold on to their local cultures and identities. People have the ability to pick and choose freely and they adopt certain elements brought forward by different cultures that bring a different aesthetic from their pre-existing one. Certain garments that have been adopted and adapted globally are those that are practical and functional and easily translated into the aesthetic of the cultures that do so. Globalisation is something to be embraced as with it comes the dispersion of ideas across borders and it leads to a very healthy form of human exchange.

As an Indian what my design sensibilities says is that even the most unusual could easily influence the trends and we need no more peeping out we have our hands full with infinite inspirations...we need to remember that we are blessed with so much happening around and as a collector we need to preserve fast fading indigenous culture of ours.

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Assessment of factors affecting student creativity in Fashion and Textile Design

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Abstract

The art and science of the creative process has arguably become elevated to iconic status. Fields such as business, science, and technology are fixated on discovering the development of human creativity as well as the traditional “creative” fields of art, design, fine and performing arts. In the information age, people are realizing that the ways in which information is creatively processed, managed and used is key to growth and progress in innovative development of products and services. The purpose of this study was to discover the type of life experiences brought to the classroom by first-year students, and whether these experiences affect creative output in textile and fashion design classes. It may be helpful to understand the variety of skills and experiences that these undergraduates bring to college, so that applicants can be evaluated within a competitive process; curricula can be built to optimize student success, and students are shown how to successfully use their unique skill sets. Subjects were 30 undergraduates enrolled in a freshman design fundamentals class. They were asked to participate during fall semester 2011. No incentives were offered to students and non-participation did not affect the student's grade. At the beginning of the semester a survey was administered asking about prior experiences, ranging from travel abroad, to hands-on classes, to other creative acts such as music and dance. During the semester, students completed assignments requiring creative design efforts. At the end of the semester, investigators evaluated final projects using a rubric focused on creative problem-solving. Statistical analysis was used to determine the effect of prior experiences on performance in creative problem solving. The only significant relationship was found between *participation in creative writing competitions and final scores*. Further research is needed to explore this relationship.

Introduction

The typical undergraduate student enters a fashion and/or textile design degree program with a wide variety of skill sets and experiences, and is expected to start exploring and achieving creative solutions to design problems from the beginning of the first semester. However, the variance between these types of experiences, particularly at public institutions, is great, and both students and faculty can struggle with the learning and teaching of the creative process due to the wide ranges of experience brought to the classroom.

The purpose of this research was to discover how factors in undergraduate college students' backgrounds affect their ability to creatively address solutions to fashion and textile design problems. The researchers designed a study which would (1) assess the types and levels of skills and experiences brought into a Fashion and Textile Design degree program at a four-year university, and (2) compare these with the assessed level of creative output achieved by the students in their freshman studio design class taken their first semester of the program. In doing so, the researchers felt they could start to understand how these variables may play into the overall success of the students' creative output in the first class of their college career.

This study will provide relevant information to help faculty understand the variety and levels of “brought” skills and experiences so that (a) students applying to Fashion and Textile Design studies can be fairly evaluated, (b) curricula can be built that optimize student success, and (c) individual students can be shown how to be successful with their unique set of tools.

Keywords: creativity, students, fashion, textile design

Literature Review

Creativity in Fashion and Textile Design is part of the recent trend in creative output that has now extended beyond the traditional “creative” fields (design, fine art, music, etc) to the business world. Authors such as Daniel Pink (2006), Richard Florida (2002) and Twyla Tharp (2003), have become textbook must-haves for today’s business world and represent a crossing-over of some authors from artist/designer to creativity guru for areas that traditionally did not consciously endorse creative thinking. *Fast Company*, the entrepreneurial business journal, contributes an annual best practices issue, which supports the exchange of information between companies who are capitalizing on creative practices with success stories, and those who are aiming to be part of that group (September 2012). Even government organizations such as the United Kingdom Department of Trade and Industry have acknowledged and promote the importance of creativity in design, innovation and research/development output in their DTI Economics Paper #15 (2005), “Creativity, Design and Business Performance”: “Creativity is vital for every part of the economy. The ability to generate a diverse set of business options through new ideas is a central feature of innovation in all firms and, as such, is central to sustained economic growth. Design, as a structured creative process, is an important competitive tool for firms in many sectors, although design activities can take many forms across those different sectors” DTI Economics Paper #15 (2005), p. 31.

University-level educators are acutely aware of the responsibility of producing highly skilled students who can meet the demands of industry’s labor needs. As the demand for creative thinkers grows across many types of industries, there are increasing educational resources designed to instill, develop and augment creative talent in students, but what do students bring to the classroom in terms of skills and experiences which might already promote creative thinking and practice? Creativity is something that faculty and employers expect from designers and product developers (Hennessey & Amabile, 2010). It is recognized and rewarded, but does the curriculum or the organization address the challenge of developing this skill? Do most faculty await the “muse” to anoint the student with an “aha” moment? Most students begin their design education with a wealth of extrinsic and intrinsic qualities. Extrinsic qualities can be described as the experiences that they have been through prior to their arrival on the college campus, such as field trips, international travel, work experience, extra-curricular activities and classes, etc. Intrinsic qualities are more accurately defined as “built-in” attributes; age, gender, ethnicity, as finite criteria, and also harder-to-define qualities such as attitude, desire, motivation, goal-setting, etc. The impact of all these variables on the students’ success in creative academic programs and their work has not been well-studied. In fact, little attention has been paid to creativity as part of the fashion and textile design educational process. Some studies have looked at demographic and personality variables such as intelligence as predictors of dimensions of creativity – Furnham and Nederstrom (2010) found in sample of adult managers (n=10,415) that extraverted males did better at a well-established measure of Divergent Thinking. Age and education was not found to be a factor.

In Fashion and Textile Design studies, emphasis appears to have been on the product as a creative output, and the ways in which it can be evaluated, rather than the student and the process of creation. Amabile’s (1997) definition of creative performance relates to the created output, stating that a product is “creative” when: “Appropriate observers independently agree that it is creative... (also)...the process by which something so judged is produced” (p. 1001). Kidd & Workman (1999) studied vividness of imagery of students in a fashion illustration course, where variation in design output was linked with enhanced levels of creative thinking, based on the assumption that creativity in the design process produces variety. Kidd & Workman’s sample of apparel design students (n=16), consisted of undergraduate and graduate students, aged 19-50, male and female. Three levels of judgment were employed in the evaluation of output: peer, self, and faculty. Five criteria were used to judge each student’s work: Functional, Creative, Aesthetic appeal, Appropriate, Original. Findings suggest that vividness of visual, auditory and tactile imagery correlated with ratings of creativity, and that ratings of creativity correlated with ratings of originality and aesthetic appeal. Ratings of functionality correlated with appropriateness, suggesting that apparel design becomes a compromise between the functional demands and the creative process, leading to some products being judged to be more creative than others, depending upon their intended end use.



Nancy Powell

Professor Powell’s degrees in design are combined with 27 years in the textile industry with design, marketing and management responsibilities. Professor Powell has research expertise in design, product development, design management, and textile design. Powell teaches undergraduate courses in the Fashion and Textile Design program and graduate courses in design and development. Powell directs design and development research studies with graduate (master’s and doctoral) students, including research in the areas of automotive textiles, woven and knit design, and product development topics. Powell has full graduate faculty status and is also a faculty member in the Anni Albers Scholars Program, a dual degree in art and design and textile technology.

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to discover the type of prior life experiences brought to the classroom by first-year students, and whether these experiences affect creative output in textile and fashion design classes. The global fashion and textile industry has experienced a dramatic cultural and operational shift with the retailer gaining power in pulling product through from the supply chain to better service the consumers. In response to demands in the market, brought to the attention of faculty at a land-grant university through high school recruiters, employers, and an industry advisory board, curriculum was redefined and a new Fashion and Textile Design degree program was developed over a seven year period. This B.S. degree is a four year program and is unique within the state system. The following description of the program is from the college webpage:

“To create global leaders in fashion and textile design, the program melds aesthetic, functional, technical, and expressive appeal, combine cutting edge technologies with traditional design sensitivities, and use of the newest fibers and processes to create innovative textiles and the fashions and other products that use them. The program’s blending of “art,” “science,” and “management” builds on the strength of University and our global industry partners.”

This land grant university's college program has traditionally been science and technology based, with a predominately male student population. The program has had support of the textile manufacturing industry with a production focus. The new B.S. degree maintains its foundation in math and science but now expands to a new facet of aesthetic principles and design disciplines. Referring to other established design program admissions procedures, a recruitment, application and acceptance process for the new B.S. degree was established to attract an academically strong candidate with evidence of creative potential for aesthetic expression.

The researchers assumed that if students are attracted to a design curriculum in a specialized area of textiles and fashion that they may have sought previously related experiences that would strengthen their competitiveness in the application process. For example, as a portfolio and essay is required, the student would naturally seek out activities in preparation for the submission of an appropriate application.

Research design

In order to achieve the objectives (discover the type of prior life experiences brought to the classroom by first-year students, and whether these experiences affect creative output in textile and fashion design classes.), the researchers decided to design a two-part study, using a self-reporting survey to assess life experiences, and a multi-rater assessment of creative output at the end of the semester. This approach was primarily quantitative. Some qualitative, open-ended questions were reported in the surveys, which will be noted in the results section.

For the first part of the study, participants self-reported life experiences by answering survey questions about related activities prior to matriculation at university (see table 1). The number and duration of experiences was assessed from the instrument and recorded in a spreadsheet. In a mixed methods approach, both closed-ended measures and open-ended observations are used (Creswell, 2003). Two open-ended questions were asked in the survey – one pertaining to types of extra-curricular activities engaged in, and the other asked what students did when they needed creative inspiration.

Table 1. List of topics from survey instrument

Questions	Y	N	How Many/Duration?
Age			
Year of Birth			
Current Year in Program			
Textile Design or Fashion Design			
In State Residency or Out of State			
Country of Origin			
Study Abroad or International Exchange			
Internship or work experience			
Hands on textile or clothing construction			
Hands on embellishment such as embroidery or screen printing			
3D projects such as jewelry, model building			
2D projects such as photography, graphic design, painting			
Textile Design courses such as weaving, knitting, printing			
Computer aided design classes			
Art or Design classes			
Textile or Design camps at college level			
Participated in visual arts competitions and/or shows			
Participation in Music performances or competitions			
Participation in creative writing competitions			
Participation in dance performances and/or competitions			
Participation in theatrical performances			
Won any awards for your work			
Extra-curricular interests - most important free time activities			
What do you do when you need creative inspiration?			

The final student projects were evaluated at the end of the semester by the class instructors and then by the researchers (with no identification of individual students) according to a 7-point scale for evaluating three aspects of creativity.

Sample

Subjects ($n = 30$) consisted of female undergraduates enrolled in a four credit freshman design fundamentals class, which was designed to provide freshmen with an introduction to fundamental creative concepts and methods. Six of the students had completed one year at the college in a related program but decided to transfer to the new degree in spite of the extra time that would be needed to graduate. They were asked to participate in the research study at the beginning of fall semester 2011. No incentives were offered to students and non-participation did not affect the student's grade. Human Subjects protocol was followed in all work involving the student subjects.

Instruments

In the first week of the semester a survey was administered during class time by the researcher (not the

class instructors). The survey contained closed-ended questions about prior life experiences, ranging from travel abroad, to hands-on classes, to other creative acts such as music, dance and creative writing. The survey was comprised of two sections: a demographic section limited to age in years, residency (U.S. state), country of origin and year in the program. Part Two contained items pertaining to life experiences obtained prior to the student entering the program, such as study abroad, work experience, extra-curricular classes and craft activities, and competitive activity in visual, performing and literary arts. The survey was reviewed by the University IRB Human Subjects Review board and declared exempt.

During the semester, student subjects completed in-class assignments requiring creative efforts. At the end of the semester, investigators evaluated final projects for this class based on their uniqueness and novelty using a 7 point scale. The class objective for this final project was to develop and create a textile work of art or functional product in which the form of the design is based on an object found in nature. Each student was asked to conceptualize and consider at least three unique ideas or exploratory paths, with creative design being 25% of the grade. In the final project evaluation, scores which evaluated (a) experimentation and generation of multiple solutions, and (b) process and product expressing enrichment of design ideas, were obtained from the class instructors. These three unique scores (uniqueness/novelty, experimentation, process/product) were averaged to obtain a creative output score. The combination of researcher and instructor scoring was used in part because the researchers had not observed experimentation and process over the semester, and in part to provide inter-rater reliability. Researcher and instructor scores were similar across measures (see table 2).

Table 2. Evaluation of Final Products

code #	ability to experiment and generate multiple solutions (instructors)	process and product demonstrate enrichment of design ideas (instructors)	end-product (Investigators)	Average score (%)
8	5.95	7	3	0.75952381
27	6.65	6.3	5	0.854761905
1	4.9	4.9	3	0.60952381
28	6.3	6.3	7	0.933333333
23	6.65	6.3	6	0.902380952
29	5.25	4.9	4	0.673809524
24	6.3	7	6	0.919047619
25	6.3	5.95	3	0.726190476
11	5.95	5.6	3	0.692857143
12	6.65	5.95	5	0.838095238
4	5.6	5.6	7	0.866666667
9	6.3	7	6	0.919047619
10	6.3	6.3	3	0.742857143
7	6.3	6.3	6	0.885714286
13	6.3	5.95	5	0.821428571
21	7	6.65	7	0.983333333
19	6.3	6.3	5	0.838095238

6	5.95	6.3	7	0.916666667
31	5.6	5.6	3	0.676190476
17	5.6	5.6	5	0.771428571
15	5.95	5.6	5	0.788095238
5	5.6	5.25	4	0.707142857
2	5.6	5.6	6	0.819047619
20	5.6	5.25	2	0.611904762
16	6.3	5.95	6	0.869047619
3	6.3	6.3	7	0.933333333
22	6.3	6.65	3	0.75952381
30	4.9	4.9	3	0.60952381
18	6.65	7	7	0.983333333
14	5.95	5.95	5	0.804761905

Data Analysis

To analyze data, a three-step statistical process was used. For the first and second steps, a simple linear regression model was used to find out the nature of the relationship between the creative output score and each reported life experience (factors). The ANOVA F test was used to determine if the slope in each simple linear regression was statistically significant. In addition, the sample was split between Fashion and Textile students to determine any differences between populations. JMP 9.0 software was used for the statistical analyses.

Results

Of the twenty nine students participating, the average age was 18.13 years, and 24 out of the 30 had entered the university as freshmen. The remaining six had transferred into the program with a year of college experience. 53% (16) had chosen Fashion Design, and 47% (14) students had elected to study Textile Design. In-state students were the majority at 93.3% (n=28).

At the first stage of the study, the relationship between the experiences (factors) of 'Study Abroad', 'Work or Intern', 'Hands on Clothing Construction', 'Embellishment Techniques', '3D projects', '2D projects', 'Textile Design', 'CAD' and the creative output score was analyzed. The results showed that none of these factors has a statistically significant contribution to the creative output score. In addition, the cumulative effect of these factors was analyzed and it was found that there was no relationship between the cumulative input data and the creative output score.

At the second stage, the relationship between the experiences of 'Art/Design Classes', 'Textile or Design Camp', 'Music Performances', 'Creative Writing competitions', 'Dance Performances', 'Theatrical performances', 'Awards Earned' and the creative output score was analyzed. The results showed that only the factor of 'Creative Writing competitions' has a statistically significant contribution to the creative output score (see Figure 1). However, just 19.6% of the variation in the creative output score could be explained by the variability in the 'Writing'. Furthermore, the cumulative effect of these factors was analyzed and it was found that there was no relationship between the cumulative input data and the average score.

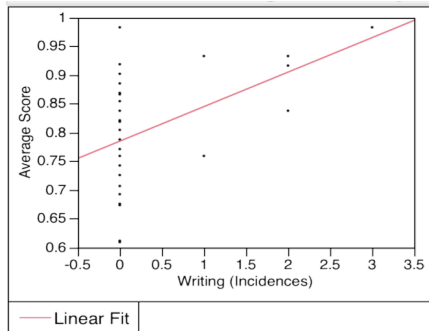


Figure 1. Bivariate fit of average score by writing (incidences)

At the last stage, the means and the variances of the average scores belonging to the two populations, Fashion and Textiles, were compared. Accordingly, it was found that there was no difference between the populations. For the last stage, the pooled-variance t test for the difference in the two means and the F test for the ratio of the two variances belonging to the populations of $F(1)$ and $T(2)$ were used. The two populations were normally distributed (see Figure 2).

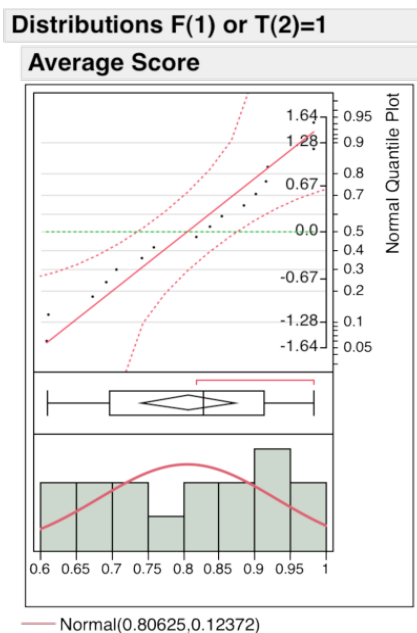


Figure 2. Distribution of Fashion and Textile students with mean and standard deviation.

Two open-ended questions had been asked at the end of the survey. The first question pertained to the various types of extra-curricular or free-time activities in which students were most often engaged. The most popular activity was “sports and exercise”. Ten students (one third of the sample) stated that they engaged in some form of sport and exercise as a free-time activity. They stated that they liked to spend their time “exercising and staying active” and “playing soccer”. The next most popular activities were “socializing” and “drawing and painting”, both of which were mentioned by 5 students”. One student defined socializing as “keeping in touch with family and friends back home”. Other activities included “reading”, “photography”, “sewing”, “crafts”, “dance”, “church” and “baking/cooking”, all of which were mentioned by between two and four students.

The second question asked about the types of creative inspiration activities students liked to engage in. Nine students (almost one third) listed “looking at magazines” as the activity which gave them most creative inspiration. Seven listed computer browsing, to “see what’s coming in style”, and five listed “exploring nature & looking around”, “museums”. Other preferred creative activities included “walking outside and observation”, “reading” and “relaxing or meditating”. One student mentioned that “I go somewhere where I can be alone and meditate/reflect on ideas”, while another wrote that she likes to “Look at old paintings, other designs, listen to music or study something very closely.” Table 3 shows the full list of activities.

Table 3. Free time and creative inspiration activities as self-reported by students

Free Time Activities	Students	Creative Inspiration Activities	Students
Photography	2	Walking outside & Observation	4
Drawing & Painting	5	Explore nature & looking around	5
Sewing	2	Computer browsing (Surf net)	7
Sports & Exercise	10	Museum	5
Crafts	4	Library	1
Travel	1	Magazines	9
Socializing	5	Read	4
Attend Sports Events	1	Trend research	1
Dance	2	Relax or Meditate	4
Reading	3	Travel	2
Church	3	Movies	1
Watch TV	1	Listen to Music	1
Designing	1	Photography	2
Riding horses	1	Sew	1
Baking/Cooking	4		
Service projects	1		
Acting/theatre	1		
Colorguard performance	1		
Trend Research	1		
Play Musical instrument	1		

Discussion

From the results of the regression analysis, it was determined that participation in creative writing competitions was the only life experience (factor) with a significant statistical relationship with the creative output score. The researchers were somewhat surprised by the results, however, this finding is similar to Kelly and Kneipp (2009), who found that *reading for pleasure* was positively correlated to creativity. In their study, university students (n=225) completed the Scale of Creative Attributes and Behavior (SCAB) – a self-reported measure of creativity based on a multi-dimensional model. A Reading for Pleasure scale was used to measure their reading habits. Reading for pleasure significantly correlated with SCAB total scores and most sub-scores. These researchers recommend incorporating creative reading and creative writing assignments into coursework to increase creative output. In the current study, the word creative is inserted in front of writing – does it logically follow that any creative output is possible if the subject has demonstrated creativity in one area?

The current researchers did not anticipate the lack of relationship between hands-on art and design classes, performing and visual arts experiences and creative output scores. It was assumed that if a student had

participated in these types of activities before enrolling in college, their level of creative output and the creative process would be enhanced by these experiences. During the college years, students are encouraged to participate in fashion shows, design exhibitions, the University Scholars program which enriches academic and cultural experiences, and study abroad as ways of enhancing their creativity. At this point, creative writing participation is not part of these recommended activities.

In addition, results indicate no difference between the Fashion and Textile students in terms of the relationship between their life experiences and creative output scores. The similarities in these findings provide a support for the researchers' objectives in using these results for recruitment of prospective students, curriculum development and preparation of students for successful careers in textile and apparel design and related fields.

The researchers also noted that in the responses to the open-ended survey questions, both reading and sewing were noted as both free-time activities, and activities performed for creative inspiration, suggesting a multi-dimensional value to these chosen activities. It may not be surprising that sewing is mentioned due to the nature of the major in which subjects are enrolled, but reading is not directly related to either major.

Conclusions & Recommendations

This study has certain limitations which are acknowledged. The first year of most participating students responding to demands of a new curriculum in a studio based class can be challenging, so there may have been some impact upon their output at the end of the semester. In addition, such a small sample size from a limited geographical area may have controlled the number and types of experiences available. The researchers did not observe the subjects over the entire semester – instructor scores were relied upon to judge experimentation and process. Also, established creativity tests, such as the Torrance Test for Creativity, could be administered to provide more in-depth measure of creativity. In terms of the life experiences, a number of variables may have had an impact, such as the presence of a mentor, coach, teacher or family member who has recommended experiences to them. Some high schools offer advanced and specialized courses in related skills and techniques which would benefit students who are motivated to pursue creative endeavors.

These findings indicate a strong recommendation to continue expressing ideas in writing in a personal journal or sketch book, in order to discover, develop, and actualize ideas/concepts into product design. It is also recommended that a written component be included in the research, idea and concept development before beginning to sketch, work with computer aided design, and create a product.

In the continuous practice and development of creative thinking skills through varied experiences, a confident perspective of innovation in solving design problems can be nurtured. Considering and communicating alternative solutions in a literate manner is not only visual or end product based. An examination of the challenge and exploration of possible solutions requires expression of concepts and ideas and translation to all stakeholders and collaborators beyond a flat drawing or a product but also with written thought. As the demands of the General Education requirements at universities reduce the number of creative writing courses, the level of writing preparation at the high school level will be critical to developing innovators of the future. Courses in the current curriculum should encourage the integration of the written expression as part of the creative design process beyond simple documentation. The value of including a written component in the final product/portfolio describing an individual design process could communicate ideas for all areas including expressive, commercial and technical.

The researchers propose, based on the results of this study, that the iconic nature of Creativity is not limited by educational, cultural experiences, and available tools/facilities but may be enhanced by the imagination, inspiring creative expression which may be independent of discipline. The researchers plan to survey the same group of students in their final and fourth year of studies to evaluate how they have acquired experiences and surmise how these experiences may have affected their creative skills over the course of their studies.

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The Fabric in our Connected Lives: Utilizing Social Media to Reach New Commodity Markets

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Author Note



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Professor Powell's degrees in design are combined with 27 years in the textile industry with design, marketing and management responsibilities. Professor Powell has research expertise in design, product development, design management, and textile design. Powell teaches undergraduate courses in the Fashion and Textile Design program and graduate courses in design and development. Powell directs design and development research studies with graduate (master's and doctoral) students, including research in the areas of automotive textiles, woven and knit design, and product development topics. Powell has full graduate faculty status and is also a faculty member in the Anni Albers Scholars Program, a dual degree in art and design and textile technology.

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Abstract

Today's consumers are increasingly interested in reviewing products online to learn more about features and to connect with other users for authentic consumer assessments. These networked consumers like sharing opinions immediately with friends on Twitter®, Facebook®, YouTube®, and other social websites. These symbols have become ubiquitous icons in connecting to goods and services in contemporary life. *Brand Keys Fashion Brand Index* 2010 poll reported that brands have become a substitute for product value, driving consumer behavior. Thus, the iconic elements that define brands must communicate the brand qualities to consumers. For example, eight out of ten Americans can identify Cotton Incorporated's logo, the white-on-brown Seal of Cotton®, and its slogan, *The Fabric of Our Lives®*. This organization's campaign is recognized as the first commodity branding, setting the standard for other product categories.

To educate college students on how to utilize social media to reach new markets, an innovative project, *Building Awareness of and Excitement for Cotton in Home Textiles Products: "Tables for Two"- A Cotton Incorporated Fabric for Life Student Challenge* was created. *Tables for Two* engaged student teams in a design and merchandising competition concluding with social media campaigns. Students created innovative brand mantras and communicated their marketing messages promoting cotton products through social media. International Textile Market Association's (ITMA) Showtime®, an internationally acclaimed fabric market, hosted an exhibition of the finalists' presentations of fabrics, visual displays, and social media marketing campaigns.

This project reveals important insights in the revitalization of an iconic commodity fiber through contemporary social methods which are rapidly becoming icons of the 21st century.

Introduction

Since the 1960's when brand names gained prominence as a qualifying purchase consideration, consumers have consistently used brands and/or their visual marks (i.e., brand name, logo, icon, and tagline) to identify product classifications, quality of product, price for product and product exclusivity. Moreover, with the recent economic downturn, "...brand meaning is increasingly a larger factor in the buying decision" (Palmieri, 2011). *Brand Keys Fashion Brand Index* (2011) reported that brands have become a substitute for product value, and value not price was driving consumer behavior. In fact, the importance of brands and logos to differentiate product for consumer purchase decisions tripled in importance from 8% in 2008 to 29% in 2011 (Palmieri, 2011).

Keywords: Icons, Branding, Social Media, Action Learning, Competition

Thus, to compete in today's marketplace, companies must create, implement and maintain an effective branding strategy in order to position their products, creating brand awareness, differentiating product, and building brand equity. Kilic, Miller and Volimers (2011) discussed branding strategy through the use of icons, asserting that fundamental elements of that strategy are the visual mark or the brand name, logo and/or icon or tagline. These brand marks infer brand attributes and benefits, serving as visual cues to other brand associations (MacInnis, Shapiro & Mani, 1999). The brand icon (i.e., image, depiction, illustration, sign, and symbol) must be memorable and unique; it becomes a symbol for the brand. For example, eight of ten Americans recognize Cotton Incorporated's white-on-brown Seal of Cotton® and its slogan, *The Fabric of Our Lives*®. This company's campaign is recognized as the first commodity branding, setting the standard for other product categories (Collins, 2010).

Another component of the branding strategy is utilizing brand names and icons in order to build an Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) plan for the purpose of communicating with today's networked consumer. This consumer likes to review products online and to connect with other users for authentic consumer testimonials. The IMC plan now must take into consideration not only traditional channels of marketing, but also social media (e.g., Facebook®, Twitter®, YouTube®, Pinterest®). Spiller, Tuten and Carpenter (2011), emphasized that a Direct IMC plan should strive to interact with consumers in their own space and their own time.

To educate students in how to develop a Direct IMC plan utilizing social media to reach new markets, an innovative project, "*Building Awareness of and Excitement for Cotton in Home Textiles Products: 'Tables for Two' - A Cotton Incorporated Fabric for Life Student Challenge,*" was created. The purpose of this paper is to describe the project, showing how we used branding icons and social media to build awareness of and excitement for cotton in home textile products.

Literature Review

An extensive literature review examined the importance of branding and social media in today's marketplace and identified potential teaching methods for the purpose of instructing students how to use branding icons and social media.

Branding and Icons

A brand is a name, logo, symbol or character, graphic, slogan, color, trademark or a combination of all of the above elements. Brands identify products, services, businesses, places, events, and even celebrities. Today's companies have discovered that, with the current economic and social climate, brands are returning to the importance held in the consumer-mindset in the sixties (Palmieri, 2010, p.11). Further, major companies have reimaged or rebranded to position themselves in today's highly competitive retail climate. For example, the giant mass merchant Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.® and the largest family-owned, regional department store, Belk,® recently rebranded themselves in order to communicate with the current consumer. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.® not only unveiled a new logo consisting of a single-word name, "Walmart," but also changed its graphics to a more evolved "squiggly" as well as its colors to a softer blue and yellow. A new tagline was also introduced, "*Save Money. Live Better*" (Home Textiles Today, 2008, para 1).

Belk rebranded, changing the font of the store name, and the iconic Belk "B" to a lower case for a new look, "belk". Belk also added a new symbol, the three-petal flower in different shades of blue, signifying three family generations in store operation. The tagline was also changed to "*Modern. Southern. Style,*" to reflect the target consumer, product offerings and store locations (Streiner, 2012).

Additionally, exclusive designer labels and private labels are now the norm for many retailers, pointing out a major shift in the direction for product branding. For example, at the mid-tier department store level, both JC Penney and Macy's are positioning proprietary labels, private brands and exclusive designer lines as margin enhancers and profit boosters (Reuters, 2011). Brands have become the differentiators among retailers, aiding consumers in making informed buying decisions. Furthermore, retailers have realized



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they must also address the interface of the customer, the brand and the new wave of marketing or digital communications platforms such as social media (Brand Keys, 2012).

Social Media

For several decades marketers have developed Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) plans, delivering a consistent and constant brand message, regardless the channel of communications. Traditionally, marketing addressed the brand message in direct mail, newspapers, radio, television, and outdoor communications vehicles. As technology developed, however, marketing departments examined personalized one-to-one promotions via e-mail, digital media and mobile phones. This new trend was coined as “relationship marketing” (Spiller et al., 2011).

Next came banner advertising on websites and the integration of Direct platforms (i.e., catalog, direct mail, website, e-mail, and mobile devices). Further, blogs, wikis, podcasts, virtual reality and social media evolved as critical parts of the IMC plan (Caravella, Zahay, Jaeger & Ekachai, 2009; Spiller et al., 2011). Social media such as Facebook®, Twitter®, YouTube®, and Pinterest® are currently the norm for the consumer market.

Using social media, companies can communicate anytime, anywhere, developing relationships between the brand and the consumer. These branded companies routinely begin with information concerning product benefits. Then, they provide some form of consumer interaction and response device. Even more importantly, consumers can share information and personal experiences about product as they shop, virtually producing an in-store shopping experience between family and friends. The consumer uses Smartphones and tablets to download coupon codes, read a review, or get a friend’s feedback on a potential purchase. Sometimes customers want to compare prices, either to get a better deal elsewhere or to see if a retailer can match the lower price (Making the Connection, 2012).

Generation Y, especially, wants to be connected and interact differently in a more immediate viral way, such as texting and tweeting. The popularity of texting at will and having instant access to information is a new marketing tool. One of the most recent developments is social media storefronts, allowing the consumer to buy product directly from the site (Spiller et al., 2011).

The literature revealed that social media is a sought after and accepted means of communicating with and amongst today’s consumers. Therefore, effective teaching methods must be identified to introduce the new applications of social media to students.

Teaching Methods

Action or active learning is based on Maslow’s theory that students learn when actively involved with the learning process. Wood (as cited in Munoz & Huser, 2008) stated that “Experiential learning can be thought of as learning by doing” or active learning (p. 215). Active learning and action learning are often used interchangeably. For purposes of this paper, the term action learning will be used. Kolb (1984) describes the process of action learning as students acquiring knowledge through the transformation of experience. This type of learning requires students to learn by doing, often applying textbook theories to solve real world business problems.

Action learning activities occur within or outside the classroom. Classroom activities may involve simulations, case studies, service learning and industry-related projects. Benefits from these activities include gaining industry knowledge, developing professional skills and improving personal communication skills. Rudolph (2010) continued the idea of action learning with the use of teams. He stated that when the subject matter is real world, students begin to understand the importance of research and the need to work in teams in order to develop problem-solving skills. After a review of action learning, the concepts of cooperative learning, teamwork and competition as potential components were reviewed.

Cooperative Learning in a Competitive Environment

Advancements in technology, coupled with the influence of TV reality shows such as *The Next Design Star* (HGTV, 2012) and *Project Runway* (A+E Networks, 2005) competitions, suggest today's students no longer want to listen to classroom lectures which often must be memorized and regurgitated on exams. Rather, they desire active involvement in their learning experience. As a way to integrate textbook concepts with real world application, classroom competitions are frequently used in a number of disciplines. (Cannon, Mody & Breen, 2008; Fleck & Hussey, 2009; Livingston & Lynch, 2002). For example, *Business Week* reported that the use of competitions is a common teaching tool in MBA programs. At Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Business, students are thrust into competition with peers every day during their education (Cornuke, 2009, para 3).

Other academicians also advocate activities involving competitive formats in a learning situation as an effective, interactive teaching tool to motivate student learning. "This method combines cooperative learning with competition to engage students. During exercises students must work together in small groups... to promote peer learning, social skills, accountability, and a sense of worth" (Cannon et al., 2008, p. 073). The group supports ideas of individual members while preparing for and participating in the competition.

Light (as cited in Fleck & Hussey, 2009), stated that "When implemented correctly small group work enables college students to learn skills in communication [written and oral] and interpretation, creative problem solving, critical thinking and time management" (p. 55). Small group discussions also stimulate students to be more considerate of other's ideas and to respect diversity and alternative solutions in solving complex business problems. Fleck and Hussey (2009), reviewing previous findings (Johnson & Johnson, 1990; Livingston & Lynch, 2002) reported that small group discussions leading to written and oral communication, creative problem solving, critical thinking and management are directly transferable to the workplace, demonstrating to students that, as future employees, they can take on complex tasks, work well with others, and take responsibility for their own learning.

Some researchers disagree, however, regarding the effectiveness of the cooperation-competition model, stating that the two concepts (cooperation and competition) are inconsistent with each other (Johnson & Johnson, 1975; Johnson & Johnson, 1990; James, 1978). Nichols and Sullivan (2010), on the other hand, believe that cooperation and competition can co-exist in the classroom, generating student curiosity and enthusiasm on topics or tasks that otherwise would be of limited interest. They note that competition between groups may increase cooperation within groups.

They report, however, that other academicians and researchers believe if classroom tasks are cooperative, students may become overly dependent on classmates when completing academic tasks, thereby leaving the student unable to perform in future competitive or individual contexts. Thus, James (1978) stresses every student should work alone to research a project component, thereby sharing with the group and contributing to the group's goal. Further, team composition and use of peers as resources is extremely important, as students with diverse skills and abilities add valuable contributions to the overall project.

In summary, the literature review emphasized the current importance of branding utilizing both familiar and newly created icons, and the impact of social media on the marketing of textile and apparel products. It also indicated that action learning, utilizing a cooperation-competition model, may be effective in teaching students how to create the Direct IMC plan.

Tables for Two Project

Focusing on the Cotton Incorporated's stated objective to increase awareness of cotton, investigators modified Gam and Banning's project development path (2011, p. 205) (Figure 1), in order to develop the year-long project.

Participants

The project drew from students in both Textile Design and Brand Management and Marketing, making it unique, in that colleges often organize fashion shows and competitions for a particular career path or group of students, but seldom reach across disciplines to encourage multidisciplinary collaboration.

Undergraduate students from Textile Design and Visual Merchandising comprised 14 teams (n=165) that participated in the project. Design students submitted portfolios of concepts to Visual Merchandising student teams for final selection of themes and fabrics. Teams used these fabrics in order to create branded displays based on identified inspiration, market analysis, and consumer research. Each team's lifestyle vignette was intended to appeal to a specific target consumer in a specific channel of distribution for a selected retailer.

Model

Each of the stages of Gam and Banning's (2011, p. 205) modified development path was employed to ensure maximum development of action learning activities and experiences as well as the infusion of the cooperation-competition model.

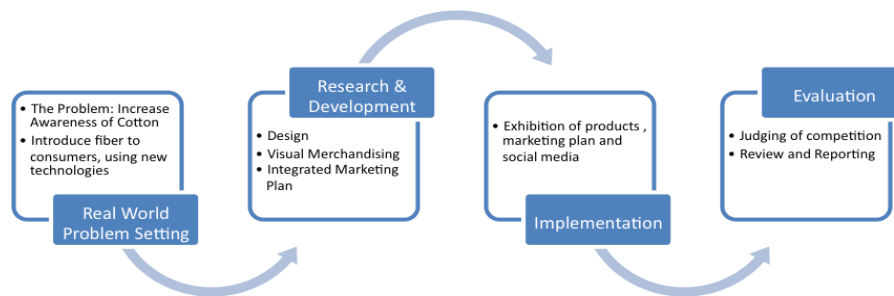


Figure 1. Stages of Problem-based Learning in a Design and Marketing Student Competition

Each of the Stages of Problem-based Learning will be discussed, with the components of each stage detailed.

Real World Problem Setting

The first stage, Real World Problem Setting, focused on defining the problem and introducing the cotton fiber to consumers.

Defining the Problem. The problem, simply defined, was to increase awareness and promote the use of cotton textiles in the home through creative applications of social media and branding of cotton products. This problem easily translated into the project goal of creative application of social media and branding of cotton products for the home, in order to reach new markets. Three objectives guided the project:

1. Develop and conduct a design and marketing competition to increase awareness of cotton fibers, yarns, textile products, and marketing techniques to promote cotton products in the home
2. Create and install visual merchandising displays showcasing the cotton fabrics and the theme of each team
3. Create a new Brand for cotton home products supporting the existing iconic Cotton brand.

This project was launched in January 2012 and completed in December 2012. In order to acquaint students with the project objectives, the investigators branded the project. The brand name, *Tables for Two*, was selected to infer the overall theme and project concept. With Cotton Incorporated's approval, a student designer created the icon, an abstract flowering cotton boll, as a symbol for the brand and as a linkage to the

iconic, highly recognized Seal of Cotton®. Vivid neon green and dark brown colors were chosen to signify the “green” movement to appeal to consumers’ interest in natural fibers.

The placement of the icon and color story as a background for the *Tables for Two* marketing materials and a PowerPoint presentation linking *Tables for Two* to Cotton Incorporated’s website introduced the project. Investigators ensured that the branding carried through all aspects of the project. It was utilized in marketing and published materials such as programs, posters, banners and award certificates. This branding set the tone for the project, culminating in the final competition.

Research and Development

The Research and Development stage included the Textile Design, the Visual Merchandising, and the IMC Plan.

Textile Design. Students in the Textile Design courses designed cotton fabrics intended for home textile applications (e.g., tabletop fabrics, window treatments, floor coverings, upholstery, napery, blankets, and pillows). Access to various cotton yarns allowed the students to design a variety of fabrics in an array of marketable colors. As a part of the project completion, students studied various textile technologies used in fabric development, identified different end uses for these fabrics, and produced unique cotton fabric collections.

Visual Merchandising. Student teams in the Visual Merchandising classes integrated the Design students’ fabrics into a visual display. The Visual Merchandising teams were required to ideate a theme, conduct consumer research, plan a marketing strategy, including a Direct IMC plan, and create a final display for the marketplace, with the ultimate goal of highlighting the many applications of cotton in home textiles. For consistency with the theme of *Tables for Two*, a table and two chairs (or some interpretation of the *Tables for Two* student-developed Brand) was required in each team’s display.

Students were encouraged to further develop their concepts in cotton fabrics with desirable hand, performance, and color qualities for a fashionable environment. The Cotton Incorporated seasonal color forecasts provided color direction for entries and graphics. As the basis of their marketing and promotional mix, students were encouraged to use as many cotton products throughout their displays as possible in order to communicate and promote the cotton campaign.

Integrated Marketing Plan. For this stage of the project, investigators developed a Marketing seminar, *Tables for Two*, with the overall objectives of students’ 1) creating an IMC plan that included a visual presentation of the product, (i.e., a display vignette design of *Tables for Two*); and, 2) developing a social media marketing campaign to promote cotton as the fiber of choice in the home textiles industry. In this final phase of the project, Cotton Incorporated marketing experts spoke to the class about technologies developed to enhance the performance of the cotton fiber and current social media marketing campaigns presently utilized to market the cotton fiber. (See www.cottonuniversity.org)

Branding Strategy. The first segment of the class focused on the six finalist teams branding their products/concepts in order to communicate with a selected target consumer. Two multimedia specialists with professional marketing experience provided students with instructions on developing the branding of the product and conducted workshops on creating social media. Based on the theme of the fabrics and displays, teams created brand names, icons, color stories, and taglines or slogans and other brand elements to use in the IMC plan. For example, the “*Jungle Adventure*” team, created a brand icon directed towards young families. The icon featured a happy elephant imposed on a striped fabric background in a square, with the wording “*Jungle Adventure*” wrapping around the fabric circle. The tagline for the product read “*Messy fun, easy clean-up*”. Using various colors of jungle animals, the color story was developed in the printed and woven fabrics.

Direct IMC Plan. The final marketing portion of the competition focused on developing an effective strategy to market cotton products through new media channels. Utilizing social networking to promote and create awareness of the performance and aesthetic properties of the cotton home textiles products, as well as

to brand those products, students collaborated on new marketing methods. Thus for the development of the Direct IMC plans, student teams explored techniques from photo editing to storyboarding to iMovie® video creation to editing and copy writing. Development of both traditional print media and virtual media from blogs to catalogues to mobile apps were emphasized. Also student teams were given templates for Facebook®, Pinterest® and Twitter® pages in order to facilitate the teams' formatting of content for new brands for cotton products. Additionally, step-by-step instructions were posted on the course webpage for using Photoshop® and iMovie®.

Implementation

The Implementation Stage included the IMC Plan, Exhibition of the Product, and Social Media examples.

Integrated Marketing Plan. In the final competition phase, teams created a Direct IMC plan, including building and installing the lifestyle visual displays in order to promote the cotton home textiles products. Teams also created research posters to explain their IMC plan, including targeted consumers, brand elements and promotional mix utilizing traditional channels and social media platforms.

Exhibition of the Product. Student teams created lifestyle displays with diverse themes ranging from *Mediterranean Escape* to *Oasis* to *Hamptons Hideaway* and to *Jungle Adventure*. These displays featured creative designs accentuating attributes of cotton fabric. Their products were exhibited at ITMA Showtime™ in High Point, NC. (Showtime™ is produced twice yearly by and for the members of ITMA. This market brings all segments of the home furnishings industry together with over 800 buyers visiting the showrooms of over 200 exhibitors). Team posters depicted the students' IMC plans which included targeted consumers, brand logo, taglines, and various elements from their social media plans. Additionally, a display unit with explanations and photographs of the entire project was featured in order to assist market attendees in understanding the project scope.

Social Media. Different types of social media were exemplified in the content of the promotional DVDs produced by each team. The DVDs played during the market reflected the branded cotton products, the consumer profiles, lifestyle elements, voice-over messages, music, and other social media components. The content included a video of each team's advertisement, a copy of their Facebook®, Pinterest® and Twitter® pages, and any additional marketing tools such as mobile apps, blogs, catalogues, or pop-up banners.

Evaluation

The final stage in the modified project development path is Evaluation, comprised of Judging of Competition and Review and Reporting.

Judging of Competition. The teams' developments were reviewed periodically by the instructors, and external judges evaluated preliminary exhibits at the end of the first semester, mid-term and second-semester in order to provide feedback to the students, and to select competition semi-finalists. For the initial critique, the judges ranged from an interior design program chair, to industry experts in textile design and marketing, multimedia specialists, and Cotton Incorporated associates. Using an evaluation form tailored to reflect the course objectives, judges evaluated the displays based on theme, color scheme, composition, and overall effectiveness in promoting cotton products. Investigators compiled the judges' scores and comments, providing feedback to the 14 teams. Ten teams were invited to proceed to the final phase of the competition with six finalist teams moving forward in the competition.

As discussed earlier under ***Exhibition of Product***, The *Tables for Two* competitions culminated in December 2012 at ITMA Showtime.™ Jurors were recruited from professionals in the marketing and textile fields and included Cotton Incorporated personnel. They utilized a refined evaluation form to rank the final project on three components: visual merchandising displays, project posters, and social media content and execution. The fabric design, color and pattern, and the overall promotion of cotton products were

evaluated in all three components. The jurors remained after the competition in order to provide valuable feedback to the students.

Review and Reporting. In order to continuously improve any process, reviews of the final results and the experience gained by participants are essential. In writing the final report of this funded project, insights into the application of a problem-based learning experience were revealed. For example, careful consideration for the balance of time and resources relevant to student motivation is required. Student performance in collaborating on a complex long term project, and completed exhibits were part of the final grade assessment.

Conclusions

This action learning project provided students with opportunities to gain industry knowledge, develop professional skills and improve teamwork and personal communications skills. The strengths of this type of learning include cross-functional team building, with team members collaborating on market research, fabric design, visual merchandising, and development of an IMC plan. By setting a real world challenge of bringing the performance and fashion attributes of cotton to the home textiles customer in the new promotional channel of social media, students began to leverage their preferred social interactions into valuable marketing strategies. In developing their displays they became aware of not only competitive products in this market segment but also of the availability of cotton products and their performance attributes.

This market venue also provided opportunities for students to network with industry professionals, broadening their views of the home textiles markets and the supply chain players. The dedication needed to work consistently over an entire year in order to successfully complete the project will be a worthwhile experience for students to add to their portfolios.

The introduction of a social media component made the project not only novel, but also provided training in the many aspects of social media including copy writing, storyboard development for video production, videography, and webpage and mobile app development. This experience will certainly provide a facet to their preparation for brand marketing and management of the future because social media applications not only facilitate consumer purchasing, but may, in fact, drive the market growth of branded textile and apparel products.

Findings from the literature indicated that current branding strategies and the impact of social media have opened up new opportunities in the marketing of textile and apparel products. Student teams were able to clearly apply these findings in their IMC Plan, translating new branding strategies and multiple uses of social media to impact their target audience. This project, based on action learning, utilizing a cooperation-competition model, confirmed that action learning and cooperation-competition in tandem, can be an effective method in teaching how to create the Direct IMC plan. The investigators recommend as teaching tools the continued use of action learning and teamwork, drawing from a cooperation-competition model, to provide important experiences for students in the field of textiles and apparel. Finally, this project reveals important insights into the use of contemporary social media methods which are rapidly becoming icons of the 21st century.

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Use of Icons in Technical Education

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Abstract

Icons, as symbols have been inspiring and guiding us right from prehistoric ages. Be it cave paintings, or petro glyphs, or pictograms, icons have always supplemented oral communication in some form or the other. At times it has even replaced the ambiguity of oral expression by its subtle yet concrete depiction in a smart manner. Modern day 'semiotics' is actually a systematic study and interpretation of all these signs and symbols pertaining to this age old element of communication. It reflects unspoken codes which might be difficult to verbally express or textually write. Through examining these codes, semioticians try to scrutinize the often overlooked meanings and cultural linkages of these symbols.

Though twenty first century is highly visual with its increased use of digital technologies, semiotic utilization of symbols and icons are no more popular. Even in education, use of symbols and icons to supplement a textual elucidation is largely uncommon. Across disciplines, students of the current generation use lots of imagery and graphic materials. But, intelligent use of icons and symbols to communicate an idea, or a concept, is missing. In fact these abilities cannot be automatically expected from the students. They need to be educated, trained and embedded into the curriculum. Even for non design programs, teachers should try to use action focused symbols and icons where verbal or textual explanation fails to bring out the intended meaning.

This paper is based on such an effort to utilize similar symbols and icons in fashion technology classes, as a unique communicating tool, to enhance learning.

1.0. Introduction

The twenty first century leads education to a dramatic technological revolution where the students are increasingly getting exposed to new technologies, both in class room learning and beyond. The students have truly evolved as digital citizens as they explore the world through internet browsing via laptops, cellular phones and personal digital assistants (PDA's). Even a preschool child nowadays use electronic multimedia supported games to learn colors, numbers, spellings and other problem solving activities. As a result, their written communication also involves explicit use of digital imagery and graphic materials. With the worldwide acceptance of electronic submissions, modern students are now really fast in word processing and other computer based technologies to manipulate, initiate, save and retrieve information for expression. But surprisingly, intelligent use of icons and symbols to communicate an idea, or a concept or impression is missing now.

Though alphabets replaced pre historic pictographs and cave paintings long back, mankind have been continuously using symbols and signs for communication. Be it spiritual illustration as in Mahayana Buddhism, or in art and literature, or just to represent an idea, symbols and icons have been continuously used as an expressive tool. But the current generation has unfortunately forgotten this scope of communication. Actually this ability cannot be automatically expected from them if its benefit is not explained and demonstrated. The multipurpose use of icons and symbols should therefore be embedded in current education system right from primary class to higher education, so that the new generation not only becomes digital natives, but also develop semiotic acumen to enhance understanding and articulation through symbols and icons.

2.0. Literature Review

Icons, derived from the Greek word for 'images'(Oxford Dictionary,2010) was first associated to religious work of art, more commonly a painting from Eastern Christianity and Eastern Catholic churches(Lossky,

Keywords: icons, semiotics, pedagogy, cutting, spreading, markers

1999, p. 23). Slowly people started using it with other implications also. Now icons represent images, or symbols to directly signify an object, or to bring out an analogy, as in semiotics. Sometime it depicts visionary creative individuals, whereas at other times icons represent significant concepts. Semiotics, also called semiology, is the study of icons and sign processes to develop an analogy, metaphor or symbolism significant to the inner meaning of the icon (Eco, 1975, p.75). This term semiotics (derived from Greek meaning 'observant of signs') was first used by Henry Stubbes in English to define the branch of medical science relating to the interpretation of signs (Stubbe, 1670). The study and analysis of icons, as done by semioticians, was the history of philosophy and psychology. Long back Roman philosophers like Plato, or his favorite student Aristotle, explored the association between a sign and the world. However in the recent past, Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), the world renowned Swiss linguist of the twentieth century played an important role in the development of Semiotics.

Another philosopher and pragmatist, Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) from America was equally instrumental in developing Semiotics as a sign theory, an account of signification, representation, reference and meaning (Peirce, 1977). Though sign theory was nothing new, Peirce's work was distinctive and fresh in term of its breadth, complexity, and particularly because of its relation with signification.

Amongst the latest theorists who worked on semiotics as a behavioral sign was Charles W Morris who combined logical positivism with behavioral empirism and finally stated three types of relations (Morris, 1971, p. 401) with respect to Semiotics, namely:

1. Semantics-Relation between signs and the things to which they refer to.
2. Syntactics-Relation among signs in formal structures.
3. Pragmatics-Relation between signs and the effects they have on the people who use them.

All these philosophers however unanimously agreed that a symbol can change an abstract idea into a tangible theory to establish a concept, an idea, or a rule. Peirce even argued that since educational institutes are places for learning, semiotic exploration in a typical classroom setup can enhance learning and teaching process. If this argument is to be accepted, then it becomes imperative to reestablish the role of students, tutors and teaching material with respect to semiotics, and therefore interpret a particular concept with respect to an icon or sign. These icons need to be explored and established by the students themselves to comprehend a similar situation in the practical world. Cunningham and Smith-Shank (1992, p. 64) also argued that Semiotic Pedagogy is deliberate nurturing of reasoning from sign to sign to create 'interpretants'. The word 'interpretant' was actually coined by Peirce who viewed a sign as a 'vobject' by creating an 'interpretant' which is an additional sign that represents some aspect of the object, but never represents the object itself. What Peirce actually meant was that our memory is always connected through signs, and we cannot directly or completely know an object. We only conceive it through 'interpretants' which give us an impression of the actual object.

Smith-Shank(1995, p. 233) subsequently mentioned in her famous essay 'Semiotic Education and Art Education' that Semiotic Pedagogy explains the teaching strategy based on semiotic work of Peirce, which is based on theory of signs on different assumptions related to conceptualization and logic. Smith-Shank further goes on to ideate three inferences from the heart of Semiotic Pedagogy, derived from the concept of unlimited semiosis. They are:

1. 'Collateral experience' makes learning possible.
2. Historically defined conventional disciplinary boundaries restrict learning.
3. The concept of learning and teaching change when the idea of environment is understood as emerging and related to creatures which share space, rather than as static surroundings for human beings. This surrounding environment was named as 'umwelt' by Von Uexkull(1982, p.25) and was further illustrated by Deely (1993).

Collateral experience, as defined by Smith-Shank is a teaching strategy where the tutor use signs in such a way that the students could visualize more signs and symbols from the original one, and therefore develop their own more appropriate clues of the original object or concept.

The next idea of Smith-Shank supports the argument that didactic teaching restricts student innovativeness and therefore promotes superficial learning. Learning should therefore be treated as a process and not a product.

And the last idea of 'umvelt' reinforces the fact that Semiotic Pedagogy helps the learner to develop a new opinion of the topic under consideration. The teachers should therefore help students develop their capacity to explore the existing codes and further develop newer codes pertinent to the subject. Semiotic Pedagogy is hence a teaching strategy for developing students' capability to decipher objects, facts and concepts through icons and symbols, that strengthen the learning process and help the students to retain the matter for a longer period.

Cunningham and Kehle(2003) more recently in their thesis 'Cognitive semiotics in education' explored the scope of semiotics to enhance class learning and further stated that 'if semiotic analysis is deliberated in educational settings, it would promote something of a revolution instructional science.' They argued that we have no direct access to the real world. Our comprehension of the world is totally mediated by signs, and therefore to conceive human cognition, we must understand the nature of our signs. They further inferred that the students should have a playful disposition reflecting an intrinsic enjoyment to solve the problem from different perspective in order to instill 'deep' learning. But as teachers we must have time to allow the students to develop this ability and provide opportunity for the exercise of abduction and reflexive analysis of a classroom lecture. A semiotic perspective guiding education for meaningful learning should therefore be provided in every sphere of modern education, even in fashion education.

Fashion education in fact was never taken seriously as a formal educational discipline till the second half of the nineteenth century, when Charles Frederic Worth (1825-1895) first designed his label (Marly, 1980, p. 2). Subsequently fashion was treated primarily as an 'haute couture' 'made-to-measure' product tailor made for the customers. Slowly it evolved to ready-to-wear (prêt-a-porter) clothes and finally mass market clothing industry where a particular garment style is made in large numbers in different sizes and colors. Hand in hand grew the requirement of formal fashion education to create manpower needs of fashion industry. Initially there were only two streams of fashion education namely fashion design and fashion technology. Now there seem to have developed a vast range of fashion education branches like fashion marketing, fashion merchandizing, fashion communication design and lastly fashion retailing.

But teaching resources like books and practical laboratory have not grown sufficiently to meet the demand. Though many fashion schools have emerged to cater to the demand of this new discipline, concrete curriculum and its relevant teaching pedagogy is still missing. And this gap is particularly evident in fashion technology discipline.

3.0. Research Methods

This paper is based on the use of Semiotic Pedagogy to teach garment cutting- an important department of fashion technology discipline, for large scale apparel manufacturing. The teaching topics are marker and spreading modes for large scale fabric cutting. The students discussed are from 4 year Undergraduate Fashion Design (B.A. (Hons) in Fashion Design) Program, based on UK Higher Education System. The classes are in 3rd year, and its size varies from 25- 30 students per batch. These students do not have any prior knowledge about the topics taught. They only know about single garment pattern cutting by scissors. Altogether 3-4 classes of 2 hours duration are spent in the said topics with every cohort.

The recorded experience of this teaching practice is from year 2007 to 2012, with a minimum of 2 sections per year.

4.1. Marker Mode and its semiotic exploration

Cutting is the foremost department of the garment manufacturing production cycle. The pattern parts of a garment are first traced on a fabric and then cut to pattern shapes. These fabric pattern shapes when joined together by sewing, creates a three-dimensional garment. Since large scale manufacturing involves cutting many plies of fabric spread at a time, great precision needs to be taken to determine the direction of placement of the paper patterns with respect to the fabric design, or the method of spreading the fabric on the cutting table, so that the pattern shapes after joining in the stitching department gives us the desired look and shape of the garment. Fabric cutting also needs to be accurately planned since fabric cost comprises of a substantial portion of the final garment cost. Even a small wastage or saving of fabric can immensely affect the cost of the garment. Let us first see the sequence of activities that takes place in the cutting department. They are as follows:

1. Marker making- This is the process of developing the jig-saw like diagram of pattern pieces which is placed on top of a set of superimposed plies, as a guide for cutting these plies of fabric into the required components of the manufactured products of a particular style (Solinger, 1986, p. 120). Nowadays, marker making takes place on a piece of paper as wide as the fabric, and pattern alignment is done with the help of a computer to ensure optimum fabric utilization. This marker paper, also called a plotter is then placed on the fabric layer and together the fabric and the paper are cut out by an industrial cutting knife.
2. Fabric spreading- After the marker plan is made, the fabric is spread out on the table as per the plan. There are however different types of spread depending upon the fabric design and garment pattern.
3. Fabric cutting- After the marker paper is placed on the top ply (top fabric layer), fabric is cut with the help of a cutting machine as per the trace on the marker. There are various types of cutting machines with different levels of technology used for large scale fabric cutting.
4. Bundling- The cut parts of the garment are then sorted and bundled together, so that the sewing operators do not have trouble in arranging the pieces while stitching. The bundles are also labeled to ease out the sorting.

Out of the four steps mentioned above, marker making and fabric spreading varies with fabric style or garment pattern and therefore needs some extra understanding. Let's discuss marker making and the relevant marker modes first, with respect to the fabric design. Glock and Kunz(1995, p. 379) in their popular book 'Apparel Manufacturing-Sewn Product Analysis' explains the orientation of pattern pieces within a marker as 'marker modes'. In order to better understand the relationship of different marker modes with respect to fabric design, one needs to therefore understand what a symmetric fabric design is. Glock and Kunz(1995, p. 161) defines 'lengthwise symmetry' as a phenomenon when viewing the fabric with the warp yarns vertical, the fabric is same in direction or appearance when it is turned 180 degrees. When it changes, then the design is called asymmetric.

The symmetry of fabric design/fabric print motif determines the correct marker mode for a definite style. With lengthwise symmetric fabrics (like plain fabric or fabric with symmetric design), the pattern parts are placed on the marker lying in any direction, up or down. This marker mode is called nap-either-way (N/E/W). The below diagram illustrates the N/E/W marker mode for sleeves of 3 sizes (Small, Medium and Large) of men's full sleeve shirt.

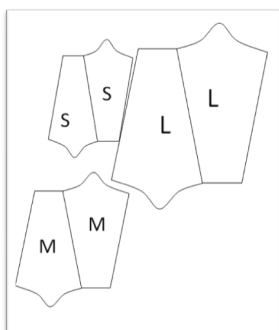


Figure 1. Nap Either Way (N/E/W) marker mode

It may be noted that in this type of orientation without any limitation (only restriction is that the pattern grain line matches the lengthwise direction of the fabric), fabric utilization is maximum, and therefore the waste left over after cutting is least.

Another type of orientation is for lengthwise asymmetric fabrics (like fabrics with one-way-prints having a specific direction) where all the pattern parts are placed in only one direction. Such an orientation is called nap-one-way (N/O/W) marker mode. This type of layout usually requires more fabric and therefore decreases the fabric utilization. The below diagram illustrates such an orientation:

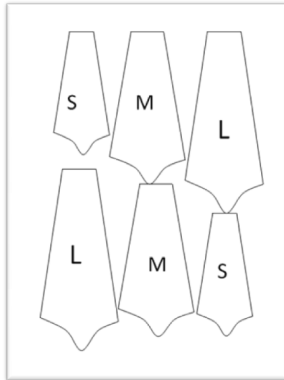


Figure 2. Nap-One-Way (N/O/W) marker mode

The third category is for lengthwise asymmetric (but non directional) fabrics, where the fabric design/print allows the pattern parts of one size to be placed in one direction and another size placed in the opposite direction. This is called nap-up-down (N/U/D). The critical factor is that the nap must run in the same direction for all the pieces of one complete size. Napped fabrics like corduroy (or non directional prints) having different shades/prints in two direction needs to be cut in such a marker orientation. The marker efficiency in this case is better than N/O/W but not as high as N/E/W. The following diagram illustrates the orientation where size 'M' and 'S' faces one direction whereas the size 'L' faces the other direction:

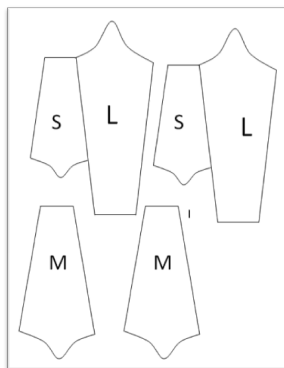


Figure 3. Nap-Up-Down (N/U/D) marker mode

Explaining this concept of symmetry/asymmetry to new students of fashion technology has always been difficult and challenging in classroom teaching. The concept was therefore articulated through actual fabric swatches suitable for all three types of marker modes. As a result, the students understand the concept better and retain the explanation for a longer period. Still, when these students land up in actual cutting rooms (during industry internship); they fail to apply their learning. This inability clearly points out a gap in the existing teaching learning process. In order to instill deeper learning various pedagogic options were therefore explored, and finally semiotic illustration was considered best suitable to attend this shortfall in understanding.

In the new teaching method, the students are not directly introduced to the fabric swatches for illustration. After the theoretical session, the students are asked to suggest background fabric icons / motifs suitable for N/E/W, N/O/W and N/U/D marker modes. Though they take some time to suggest background motifs of a symmetric design in the form of vertical lines (|), or horizontal lines (-), or circles (O), slowly they

start suggesting other complicated icons from the English alphabet like H,N,S,X and Z which are also true examples of symmetric icons (since after rotating 180 degree the icons still remains |, -, 0, H,N,S,X and Z) and are therefore suitable for N/E/W marker mode. Some students even suggest abstract symbols which are not part of the English alphabet but are brilliant examples of symmetric design motifs. In each case, the orientation of the icons with respect to the pattern parts in the final garment remains same after stitching the parts to a complete garment. The students are then asked to assign a representative symbol to the symmetric design that best exemplifies the concept. This symbol is subsequently used with the word 'lengthwise symmetry' for future class activities on marker modes. The students usually choose the letter 'S' (abbreviated for the word 'S'ymmetry as well as remains same even after rotation of 180 degrees) or some other similar letter/symbol with another logic to signify the concept. The N/E/W marker mode in an 'S' motif fabric will look as follows:

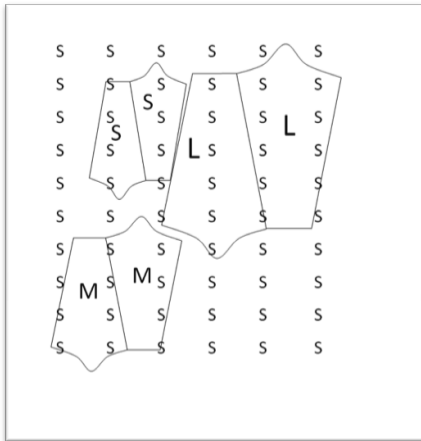


Figure 4. Nap Either Way (N/E/W) marker mode in a 'S' printed fabric

One needs to catch the main feature of this motif(S) which remains same everywhere in the garment after it is stitched size wise. It may be assumed that the two sleeves of every size S/M/L represent not just the sleeve but all the pattern parts of size S/M/L, and therefore the whole garment.

The students are then asked to suggest print icons suitable for N/O/W marker mode. Since N/E/W symbols are already established, other English alphabets like ABCDEFGJKLPQRTUVY are then pointed out as lengthwise asymmetric symbols. Abstract icons like a flower (🌸) with petals supported on a stem or branch, are also suggested as asymmetric icons by the students. The students are again asked to designate a symbol to the term 'lengthwise asymmetry' and letters like 'A' (suggesting 'A'symmetry and also shows asymmetry, i.e. it looks different when rotated 180 degree) are commonly suggested. The N/O/W marker mode in an 'A' motif fabric will look as follows:

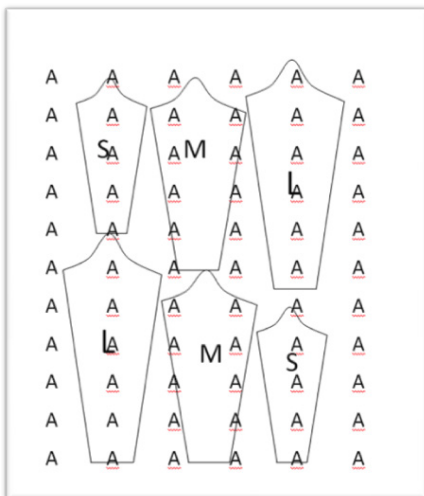


Figure 5. Nap-One-Way (N/O/W) marker mode in an 'A' printed fabric

One needs to understand that the pattern parts if rotated for fabric utilization aligns the letter 'A' inverted which is clearly different from the original standing icon 'A', and is unacceptable in any part of the final garment. Due to this limitation, marker efficiency is least in this mode and fabric consumption (and garment cost therefore) remains highest amongst the 3 types of marker modes. Here, the narrower end of the pattern parts cannot be adjusted with the wider end of the other side of the pattern to increase fabric utilization, as in the previous case. So, there is no empty space (as available in bottom right hand side of the marker in Figure 4) to accommodate some other pattern parts in the marker.

Next comes the last marker mode i.e. N/U/D. Here the students suggest symbols like 'W' which becomes 'M' when rotated by 180 degrees and hence can be used as background print motif for N/U/D marker modes. Other abstract symbols like '┌' or 'Δ' are also used as examples in this case. One needs to keep in mind that for a particular size the print motif/icon remains same in all the pattern parts. The students are again asked to designate a symbol for this type of lengthwise asymmetric (but reversible) motifs. So, icons like 'W' (since this is the only letter in English alphabet which when rotated by 180 degree becomes 'M' which is also another meaningful English alphabet) are suggested representatives of 'lengthwise asymmetric' but reversible motif. The diagram of an N/U/D marker mode with the letter 'W' as a print icon is given below. One needs to understand that in size S and M, the background motif will be 'M' (since the inverted patterns for size 'S' and 'M' gets straightened when sewed) and for size L, the background motif will be 'W' when the pattern parts are stitched together to a complete garment. Since both M and W can be accepted as fabric motifs, they are typical examples of print icons for N/U/D marker modes.

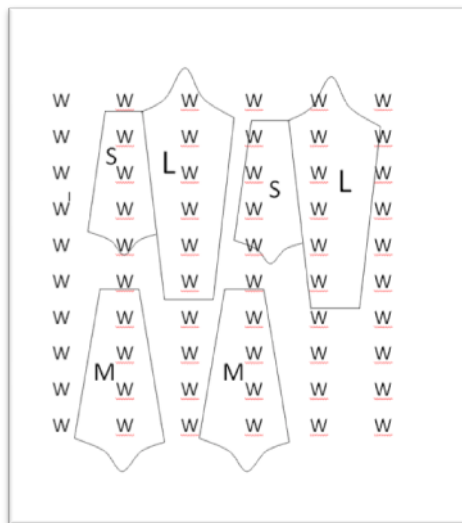


Figure 6. Nap-Up-Down (N/U/D) marker mode in a 'W' printed fabric

It should be kept in mind that the letter 'A' or 'A' cannot be used here as its inverted form clearly indicates a mistake and therefore cannot be accepted as a desired print icon, even if the whole garment consists of the same inverted motif. The average fabric consumption in this mode (N/U/D) is lesser than N/O/W but more than N/E/W marker mode. The available empty space at the bottom right hand side of Figure 6 is less than Figure 4.

It should also be noted that 'S' or 'W' motif fabric cut in N/O/W marker mode, will give perfect pattern pieces for stitching. But the fabric consumption will be higher in both the cases and will therefore not be desirable.

4.2. Spreading Mode and its semiotic exploration

Now let us see the next technical feature of cutting room management, which is fabric spreading. If the marker mode determines the manner that pattern pieces are arranged in the marker, spreading mode tells us the manner in which fabric plies are laid out for cutting (Glock& Kunz, 1995, p. 382). Two factors are

considered for determining the appropriate spreading mode (a) direction of fabric face (b) direction of fabric nap. So, we have four types of options for spreading a fabric on the cutting table. They are as follows:

1. Face One Way/Nap One Way (F/O/W, N/O/W) spreading mode- here, the fabric is spread from one side, cut, and again spread from the same side, with the front facing up and back facing down for every layer in the spread.
2. Face One Way/Nap Up Down (F/O/W, N/U/D) spreading mode- here, the fabric is spread from both sides, with the front facing up and back facing down for every layer in the spread.
3. Face to Face/Nap One Way (F/F, N/O/W) spreading mode- here, the fabric is spread with alternate layers facing up and the other alternate layers facing down. The direction of spread however remains unchanged.
4. Face to Face/Nap Up Down (F/F, N/U/D) spreading mode –here the fabric is again spread with alternate layers facing up and other alternate layers facing down. The direction of spread also changes alternately. The best part of this spreading mode is that the fabric need not be cut after each spread. It is only turned and placed on top of the previous layer.

Out of the four, type 4 spreading mode is the cheapest and the quickest since the fabric doesn't require intermediate cutting after every spread. But we cannot spread all styles in this mode. Only for symmetrical pattern pieces, the fabric may be spread all the same way up or face to face (Carr and Latham, 1994, p. 20). If the pattern pieces are asymmetrical, the fabric has to be spread all the same way up (or down) only. Otherwise, the spread will result in half the garments being asymmetrical the wrong way and hence produce, for example a double-breasted garment buttoning the wrong way. Below are sketches of symmetrical and asymmetrical patterns for understanding. For clarity we may assume symmetric pattern parts as those where left and right patterns are mirror image of each other i.e. they are laterally inverted. For asymmetric patterns, the right and left patterns are not mirror image of each other.

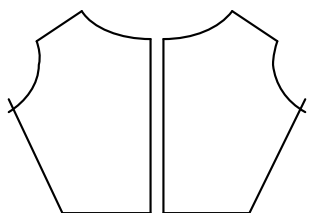


Figure 7. Symmetric pattern parts

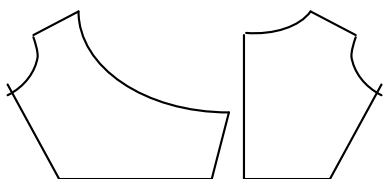


Figure 8. Asymmetric pattern parts

For better understanding, the students are again made to designate icons representing symmetric and asymmetric patterns. They usually suggest icons like '↑' or '↔' representing symmetric patterns, and icons like '↘' or '→' representing asymmetric patterns. Since icons like '↑' or '↔' don't change after lateral inversion along its central axis, they are commonly suggested as representative icons for symmetric patterns. Similarly icons like '↘' or '→' which changes after lateral inversion along its central axis, are representative icons for asymmetric patterns. Other symbols with similar logic are also suggested in the class.

After marker and spreading modes are well understood by the students, the class gets an activity for deciding marker and spreading modes of complete garments of different fabric designs and pattern types. Instead of observing the marker and spreading modes separately, they are seen together now. In this activity, the students make a grid representing all the possible combinations of lengthwise symmetric/asymmetric fabric design with respect to symmetric/ asymmetric pattern parts and then predict their

ideal marker and spreading modes (shown as '?' in the grid). Without iconic representation the grid looks as follows:

Serial No.	Fabric Design	Pattern Design	Marker Mode	Spreading Mode
1	Lengthwise symmetric design	Symmetric pattern	?	?
2	Lengthwise symmetric design	Asymmetric pattern	?	?
3	Lengthwise asymmetric design (but non directional print)	Symmetric pattern	?	?
4	Lengthwise asymmetric design (but non directional print)	Asymmetric pattern	?	?
5	Lengthwise asymmetric design (and directional print)	Symmetric pattern	?	?
6	Lengthwise asymmetric design (and directional print)	Asymmetric pattern	?	?

Figure 9. Activity Grid 1

It has been seen that the students find it difficult to complete this activity in spite of a prior explanation of each of the technical terms in the grid. This gives us an indication that the students do not understand the concepts fully when they are theoretically explained, without semiotic exploration. The same grid when illustrated with an explanatory symbol/icon (suggested by the students during semiotic analysis) adjacent to each technical term, gave far better results now. The grid and the correct answers are given below:

Serial No.	Fabric Design	Pattern Design	Marker Mode	Spreading Mode
1	Lengthwise symmetric design (S)	Symmetric pattern(±)	N/E/W	F/F, N/U/D
2	Lengthwise symmetric design (S)	Asymmetric pattern(↘)	N/E/W	F/O/W, N/U/D
3	Lengthwise asymmetric design, (but non directional print) (W)	Symmetric pattern(±)	N/U/D	F/F, N/U/D
4	Lengthwise asymmetric design, (but non directional print) (W)	Asymmetric pattern(↘)	N/U/D	F/O/W, N/U/D
5	Lengthwise asymmetric design, (and directional print) (A)	Symmetric pattern(±)	N/O/W	F/F, N/O/W or F/O/W, N/O/W
6	Lengthwise asymmetric design, (and directional print) (A)	Asymmetric pattern(↘)	N/O/W	F/O/W, N/O/W

Figure 10. Activity Grid 2

Since the students have themselves designed these icons, they know their representation better and therefore can predict the marker and spreading modes with more accuracy and confidence than the previous grid. At the end, the students are also asked to identify their own dress (which they are wearing) with the given six conditions in the activity grid, and therefore suggest its ideal cutting room marker and spreading modes.

The above result reinstates Smith–Shank theory on classroom ‘collateral experience’ with symbols and signs for teaching enhancements. The icons used act as ‘interpretant’ or ‘vobject’ of Peirce which helps the students in reasoning out the concepts quickly and therefore understand the hypothesis better.

Additionally it gives a playful disposition as rightly pointed out by Cunningham & Kehle (2003) reflecting an intrinsic enjoyment to solve the problem, and therefore promote better understanding of the subject.

5.0. Conclusion and Suggestions

From cave symbols to abbreviation acronyms, icons of coded information have been a common medium of human communication. In all these systems, the icons are invariably used to identify, to teach, and to simplify an idea to facilitate our understanding. Sometime it has even replaced the ambiguity of oral expression by its subtle yet concrete depiction in a smart manner. Be it for a spiritual exposition, or as a scientific formula, icons and symbols form an integral part of human civilization. In fact the progress level of any civilization has been directly correlated with the extent of their symbolic use of signs and paintings. The capability to either represent an existing life replica or to depict an idea or concept has therefore been an inherent part of human nature.

Humanity has also developed this ability through centuries either unknowingly or through a methodical pedagogy, like Semiotic Pedagogy which is an active, participative, innovative process to develop classroom teaching learning activity. Theorists have been giving different names to these symbols or its use to develop teaching. Where Peirce calls these illustrative icons 'interpretant' that closely represents the main object, Smith-Shank calls the teaching experience as 'collateral experience' which makes teaching deeper and more enriching. It replaces conventional didactic teaching with an 'engaging student centric teaching' where the lecturer explains the concept at its fundamental level and builds up a thoughtful relation to rediscover a hypothesis. In the current context, use of icons to represent marker and spreading modes not only enhances axiological concept of the topic, it also brings fun and excitement to discover something new and further use it to solve practical lifetime problems. Needless to say, the tutor also needs to be patient enough to allow this experimentation in a timely bound class. But once it is successfully implemented, the confidence and sureness of the students make the tutor actually realize why Nikos Kazantzakis, the prolific Greek writer commented-'True teachers are those who use themselves as bridges over which they invite their students to cross; then, having facilitated their crossing, joyfully collapse, encouraging them to create their own.'

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Iconic Fashion Education of Tomorrow

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Abstract

The development of costume and subsequently of fashion within the cultural and social context of particular moments in time is iconic for the discourse of fashion and the fashion system. Therefore it is of great importance that the future fashion professionals, whether they be designers, marketers or production managers at any point in the chain, have a general comprehension of fashion's past in order to manage, if not create, its future. Fashion academies are thus responsible to facilitate this iconic knowledge so inherent in the world they are preparing their students for. However, while the academies generally have all the requirements (experts, knowledge, enthusiasm) in house, more often than not it appears that fashion history with all its ramifications in the social and cultural spheres as a bona fide course has become somewhat neglected. Several reasons can be accounted for. Because of history's theoretical nature and the traditional approach to lecturing that it therefore most likely supposes, it conflicts with the fore mostly practice-based education that fashion academies offer. Furthermore, as the education is practice-led, which is not only time-consuming in itself but also aligns multiple courses in such a way that a single product is generally the expected end result for all, time for anything else is scarce. Finally, fashion academies are introducing a broader spectrum of programs and the education is becoming increasingly made-to-measure the individual. While this certainly is a good development, it proposes difficulties when it comes to offering a course in terms of fashion history. What is suitable for whom? This paper introduces an educational model recently developed at Amsterdam Fashion Institute, which not only offers a solution to re-integrate fashion history into the curriculum of fashion institutes but also proposes a new way to facilitate the sharing of knowledge-resources between fashion institutes around the world. In conclusion, this paper will propose an iconic innovative method to enhance the quality of fashion education worldwide and to strengthen the global fashion education network.

Introduction

The crux of fashion can be found within the history of fashion or dress, which the numerous scholarly works that have been published over the years prove. The fashion discourse and the fashion system thrive on the developments of dress within the cultural and social context of particular moments in time.

Fashion (as a concept and a material manifestation) is the result of a historical process: *fashion as a flux of time*. [...] Fashion in this case is a process that extends over time and takes on different characteristics. It often negates what had been present just a moment before in a continuous search for the new, the different and the unexpected. (Riello & McNeill 2010, p. 1)

Therefore, it is beyond doubt very important that fashion students not only learn the so-called tricks of the trade but also obtain an understanding of fashion's iconic evolution. These future fashion professionals, irrespective of their role within the industry, should have a general comprehension of fashion's past in order to manage, if not create, its future.

Fashion academies and universities are generally well equipped to instill the concept of fashion into the minds of their undergrads. However, while the academies generally have all the requirements (experts, knowledge, enthusiasm) in house, more often than not it appears that fashion history with all its ramifications in the social and cultural spheres as a bona fide course has become somewhat neglected. And not without reason: it can be found quite a challenge to offer a fashion history course that does justice to the extent and iconic qualities of the narrative and at the same time fits within the curriculum.

Two elements bring on this challenge: the sizable amount of the content and the limitations of time and space within the study program. The former evokes questions regarding the qualitative element of a fashion history course: where and when to begin and what to in- and/or exclude? What is the angle of the course;



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should it relate to other subjects in the program? And how to compile the content in such a way that it will service every student to a certain extent? Furthermore, since fashion academies are introducing a broader spectrum of programs, and the education is becoming increasingly made-to-measure the individual, the question arises whether a mere selection will suffice for each and every one of these future fashion professionals to build on? Thereby, it is quite a challenge to find a suitable lecturer; since the scholarly fashion discourse is relatively new, the profession of fashion historian subsequently is still a fairly rare one.

Secondly, there are the limitations of time and space to fit everything into the curriculum and subsequently the schedule, which per se is probably a challenge for every fashion academy. As the education is generally practice-led, which is not only time-consuming in itself but also aligns multiple courses in such a way that a single product is generally the expected end result for all, time for anything else is scarce. Furthermore, this practice-based approach implicates a probable third obstacle. Because of history's theoretical nature and the traditional approach to lecturing that it therefore most likely supposes, it is prone to conflict with how students experience the other courses; it requires for students to be rather passive during the course and only to become active at the end of the course when an exam or a paper is due, opposed to the constant active attitude expected during for instance design or brand analysis classes. A first year AMFI student commented:

The projects and such, I think they have such a big role. Usually during the day you have to coordinate everything you're doing for that, and sometimes it's like 'I want to pass my projects; and I work for that and skip the lectures'. And then you get [stuck] into this magical circle of [falling behind]. (International Branding student, 2012)

In short, it could be stated that a fashion history course requires a selection of the most important and iconic moments in fashion history suitable for the average fashion student to be discussed within a limited amount of time, ideally within a context that evokes the student's activation for the duration of the course. Therefore, the main question is: how to deal with the problems of flexibility and 'experts' of fashion history within fashion education?

The Amsterdam Fashion Institute – henceforward referred to as AMFI – has recently developed a new method of teaching fashion history that could be an answer to this question. It offers a solution to re-integrate fashion history into the curriculum of fashion institutes: it is a way to deal with different facets of fashion history, while it preserves knowledge of experts at the same time. Furthermore, it involves students actively and has the flexibility to change or adjust when needed. And finally, it could enable fashion institutes from all over the globe to exchange expert knowledge to create and enhance fashion history courses.

After establishing the importance of fashion history further and the reason for AMFI's approach to it, this paper will introduce this new educational model. Then, the benefits, disadvantages and effectiveness of this method will be discussed. Finally, this paper will propose an iconic innovative method to enhance the quality of fashion education worldwide and to strengthen the global fashion education network.

The importance and complexity of fashion history within fashion studies and fashion practice

The numerous scholarly works on fashion published over the last thirty years or so indicate that the fashion phenomenon is a subject that can be dissected from multiple perspectives; it invites interdisciplinary approaches and is of great interest to many worldwide (Barnard 2007; Kawamura 2011; Steele 2010; Wilson 2010). Also the rise of Fashion Studies as an academic study, while unfortunately still not always acknowledged as such, underpins the relevance and importance to undertake studies into fashion (Kawamura 2011; Steele 2010; Wilson 2010).

However, while these certainly are very welcome developments, it appears that a theoretical approach to fashion is currently for mostly reserved for academic disciplines like sociology, cultural anthropology, cultural studies and so forth (Barnard 2007; Kawamura 2011). Yuniya Kawamura, Associate Professor of Sociology at the Fashion Institute of Technology, problematizes this further as she states, "There is a clear

separation between scholars and practitioners who work in the industry”, which she urges must disappear “so that both can benefit from the other” (2011, p. 123). Therefore, should fashion practicing students, who actually are and will be dealing with the tangible side of fashion, not be equally aware of the meaning and complexity of fashion as scholarly fashion students, who in fact are and will be studying fashion from a distance?

Giorgio Riello and Peter McNeill, authors of *The Fashion History Reader*, corner fashion history “as a meeting point between the long-standing historical investigation of ‘dress’ and ‘costume’ and the more recent development of those sociological and anthropological-inspired studies that have come to be called ‘fashion theory’” (2010, p. XXV). Abby Lillethun, co-editor of *The Fashion Reader*, understands fashion theory as “inquiry into fundamental questions about fashion with the objectives of examining, understanding, and explaining fashion change for a variety of purposes” (2011, p. 117). In both cases fashion history is clearly an important instrument to be employed in academic fashion studies.

Fashion history is naturally closely related to fashion practice.

In the contemporary fashion designs of Vivienne Westwood and John Galliano, history is as much a catalogue of past times, as it is a unique laboratory for contemporary design direction. Designers, fashion communicators, journalists and fashionistas engage with history in order to better understand what fashion means in the present day. (Riello & McNeill 2010, p. 3)

It could even be said that the fashion industry, as it “is ruled largely by the same intention as its end product: change” and involves everyone who deals with the design, production, promotion and distribution of fashion (Wilson, 2010), is *per se* fashion history in the making.

Fashion history “reveals the importance of changes in appearance, but also the way fashion is conceived, who participates, and for what and how many occasions (Revell Delong 2010). According to Welters and Lillethun, knowledge of fashion history is important, because historicism is dominant in postmodernity (2011, p. XXI). However, Christopher Breward, Professor in Historical and Cultural Studies at London College of Fashion finds, “whilst much of this work [cultural studies] has found its way through to the teaching of fashion students with their more pressing contemporary interests, broader historical issues have remained largely beyond their concern” (2000, p. 25).

Therefore, to ensure that fashion practicing students obtain at least some theoretical fashion knowledge a solution would be to provide fashion history at fashion schools, because it lies at the root of fashion practice and provides the starting point to explain (most) fashion theories.

The Theoretical Backbone Fashion: a New Didactic Approach to Fashion History

The main subject of this paper concerns the *Theoretical Backbone Fashion*, a fashion history subject taught to all first year AMFI students, and the new didactic approach that has been developed especially for this. Before this can be discussed in detail, the general concept behind the education at AMFI should be introduced as well as the framework in which the *TBB Fashion* is embedded.

The Creative Cycle

The Amsterdam Fashion Institute, part of the Amsterdam University of Applied Arts, offers three (international) bachelor courses: (I)Fashion & Design, (I)Fashion & Branding and (I)Fashion & Management. The education AMFI provides is based on the Creative Cycle, which is a cycle used to establish and enhance a particular set of an AMFI student’s competencies, such as *orientation*, *realization* and *presentation*. These competencies provide the students with a structured yet flexible and original framework in which they should be able to successfully create a product, such as a collection or an identity for a fashion brand.

Because of this the education at AMFI consists of three types of classes: *Workshops*, *Toolshops* and the *Theoretical Backbone*. Within these respective classes different competencies are addressed. Under the guidance of coaches students develop their products in the *Workshops*. In the *Toolshops* specific

skills, so-called *Tools*, and knowledge are imparted that are needed to create the assigned products; for example, pattern drawing, knitting, brand analysis and the use of Illustration software. Both *Workshops* and *Toolshops* are provided to groups not larger than approximately 25 students and within the context of the student's graduation specialization (design, branding or management).

The *Theoretical Backbone* or *TBB*, as it will be called henceforward, is quite a distinct type of class compared to the other two. While the *Toolshops* and *Workshops* run through the whole curriculum, the *TBB* only runs through the first two study years and is divided into four subjects: two in the first year and two in the second year. Furthermore, it is provided to all students, irrespective of the student's graduation specialization. The *TBB* imparts knowledge not directly related to a specific or assigned product; rather, it provides the so-called backbone of theoretical fashion knowledge related to culture, politics, economics and history that is important to fashion's future professionals (Bouwman-Sarraf 2012; Holden 2012; van de Velde 2012).

The TBB structure

In the first year the *Theoretical Backbone Fashion* and the *Theoretical Backbone Business* run parallel over the full length of the year. The former concerns iconic fashion history, while the latter deals with the fashion industry from a business perspective, with topics such as *Production, Marketing, Finance, Business models* and *Intercultural Awareness*.

In the second year the *TBB* consists of respectively the *Theoretical Backbone Culture* and the *Theoretical Backbone Fashion Strategies*, which are given successively in the first and second semester. The *TBB Culture* revolves around fashion theories from different academic disciplines, such as sociology, anthropology, philosophy and gender studies, and provides students with a critical reflection on diverse subjects and concepts within fashion like *images, gender roles, identity, culture* and *society*. The *TBB Fashion Strategies* focuses on strategies developed and used by fashion brands. In order to enhance the students' understanding of the operational side of the fashion industry, the importance and function of strategies within the fashion industry is demonstrated by means of case studies.

The TBB Fashion

As mentioned, the *TBB Fashion* revolves around fashion history, but it specifically focuses on broadening and deepening the students' knowledge of fashion within both a historical and cultural context. The content of the course is currently divided into two main topics. In the first semester, the *TBB Fashion* focuses mostly on fashion in the historical sense: it links iconic historical events to the development of fashion in the social, cultural and political context. In the second semester, the emphasis lies on the more or less modern sense of fashion, covering the period between the late 20th century and present-day. It examines the shifts in and meanings attached to fashion in the contemporary context, using examples of for instance popular designers, styles and other occurrences in relation to the *Zeitgeist*.

A New Approach

Marci Powell, Global Director for Education at Polycom and Chair Emerita, has said, "It takes some drastic things to change education" (2012). The recent change within the structure of the *TBB Fashion* illustrates this rather well, as it has been brought about by sheer necessity rather than by an organic process.

Until fairly recently one person was responsible for the content and form of the *TBB Fashion*. This meant that, even though the program ran successfully over the course of the years, the quality of the *TBB Fashion* was inextricably tied to one person; was this individual to leave then the entire content of the *TBB Fashion* would leave with her. And this is exactly what happened.

As pointed out earlier in the introduction, fashion historians or experts in this field are still quite scarce, especially in the Netherlands. Therefore, when this occurred a temporary solution was called for. Six of the original lectures were recorded for the upcoming first semester. This ensured that the program could continue more or less in the same manner and provided a reasonable time-span in which to find a replacement of a certain caliber. However, as these recorded lectures were made available online, this meant that students would miss actual contact hours with a lecturer. Therefore, it was decided that after every three web-lectures¹ there would be an interval in which students were to attend so-called tutorials, and would be given an assignment.

Soon after its introduction it became apparent that this construction generally suited the students rather well: they were more flexible to divide their own time now that they did not have to attend two-hour lectures every week. Therefore it was decided that the temporary solution would be extended and transformed to a more permanent format.

The Advantages and Disadvantages

For the past eighteen months AMFI has worked with this new *TBB Fashion* format. Although this means that at this moment not all semesters have run twice, and the results therefore cannot yet be compared as such, the data collected from this period can nevertheless provide a general indication of its effectiveness. The success of a course or subject is closely related to its strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, the advantages and disadvantages will be discussed using data obtained from in-depth interviews with fifteen students held after the first twelve months² and test results over the course of thirty months.

The *TBB Fashion* used to consist of traditional lectures³; the lecturer would provide information and students would make notes during these lectures. There would also be occasional guest lectures, but this differed each year. All the provided material together with students' notes would be the exam material. The current situation is quite different: the students watch the (web-)lectures of approximately an hour online instead of attending them. They are free to decide when and how many times they want to view these web-lectures. Subsequently, the exam material consists of the content of the web lectures, the given literature and several films. Guest lecturers are still invited, however, these lectures are also recorded and provided as web-lectures. Therefore, the benefit of this method is that it not only creates a very flexible learning environment but also creates a database with recorded lectures of specialists on a wide range of iconic topics within fashion history, which, in turn, makes the program very dynamic. Web-lectures provide the opportunity to relate contemporary developments in fashion to iconic moments in fashion history.

Image 1 is a screen-shot taken from one of the TBB Fashion web-lectures



1 Web-lectures are pre-recorded lectures made available on the Internet.

2 Because the submission date of this paper it was not possible to interview current first year students, who are now following the TBB Fashion. At the time of writing the first semester was not yet completed.

3 The word traditional is used to indicate the style of lecturing, which is predominant within the University and College curriculums: a lecture in which the lecturer orates in front of a large group of students.

Thus, the main difference between the old and new *TBB Fashion* is space and time. Web-lectures do not require large lecture halls as traditional lectures do. In other words, it is no longer a requirement for students to be educated while being physically present. Furthermore, the lecturer is no longer required to provide the students with the necessary knowledge on a weekly base. As a result, the new situation has a positive effect on the schedule and general organization:

From a management position, I think that it is useful that we can save costs by recording them and using them again and again and it gives us the ability to have more guest lecturers, which adds to the value. So we have guest lectures plus web lectures. It makes it more flexible, it makes it more cost effective and, from an educational point of view, it directs the learning or the education more towards our clients and their needs. I think it is very good for the way they learn. (Holden 2012)

Furthermore, it creates opportunities for both the lecturer and the student. Each semester consists of approximately ten web-lectures and three tutorials of 100 minutes; every tutorial revolves around the content of three or four web-lectures. The objective of the tutorial is to actively engage the students with the content of the web-lectures. At the beginning of the semester all students are divided into groups of approximately four students. In advance of every tutorial six of these groups are given an individual topic related to the content of the web-lectures prior to this tutorial, which they have to research within their group. They are allowed to use the information the assigned web lectures, literature and films provide, however, their own research material is most important. Then, during the tutorial each group will present their findings to their peers, who subsequently will give feedback on the content and their presentation skills according to a specially designed feedback form. In short, during these tutorials students teach students, while the lecturer functions more as a coach, overseeing the whole and reflecting on the overall quality of the presentation. Thus, contrary to students passively receiving information, as was the case with the previous *TBB Fashion*, students are now actively involved with the given information for their own research purposes, while the lecturer is more of a stimulating force rather than a dominating one.

This new form of teaching has different consequences. Students' learning objectives have changed from merely knowledge reproduction, and ideally comprehension, to the application and analysis of knowledge, according to Bloom's *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals* (1956, p.18). Furthermore, instead of merely receiving information and reproducing it during an exam, students now learn and improve their research and presentation skills during the tutorials. And as a bonus, students obtain more in-depth knowledge on certain topics through their own research. But more importantly, this method should ensure that students are better prepared for their exam: not only because they receive the information multiple times through different mediums (the web lectures, which can be viewed without limitation, the literature and tutorials), but also because this method involves students with the course material and enables them to actively participate in their learning. This is a form of active learning in which students learn best (Instruction at FSU: A Guide to Teaching & Learning Practices 2011, p. 11).

The main point of *active learning* is to actively engage students, giving them space to do research, to reflect and to use their findings. Meyers and Jones (1993, p. 6) state, "Active learning involves providing opportunities for students to meaningfully talk and listen, write, read, and reflect on the content, ideas, issues, and concerns of an academic subject" (in Instruction at FSU: A Guide to Teaching & Learning Practices 2011, p. 75). In addition to this, the role of the lecturer changes too.

Active learning shifts the focus of instruction from what should you, the instructor, teach or deliver to students to what do you want students to be able to do with course material. Similarly, students must enter class prepared to use assigned readings and reviewed material from past classes, etc. Not only are students expected to be up-to-date on course material, but to have assimilated the material so they can use and build on it. When students recognize that your course involves active learning, they will also recognize that they must be active if they are to succeed in the course. Instruction at FSU: A Guide to Teaching & Learning Practices 2011, p. 75)

Thus, the lecturer changes from being a deliverer of knowledge to being the constructor of learning goals/outcomes and content (as he/she decides on the content of the web lectures, the literature, the research topics, etcetera) as well as being a guide/coach during the tutorials.

A counterargument to the effectiveness of this method could be that teaching by means of web-lectures can never lead to a deep approach⁴. A reason therefore is the lack of interaction. For a student to become motivated or stimulated, interaction between the student and the teacher is needed. Furthermore, research has shown that generally 40% of the time students do not concentrate on what is being said in a lecture and that they only retain 70% of the information in the first ten minutes and only 20% in the last ten minutes of a lecture (Meyers and Jones 1993 in *Instruction at FSU: A Guide to Teaching & Learning Practices 2011*, p. 78). In addition, a purely verbal presentation should last no longer than 20 minutes (before a learning activity is given), because after that the student's level of attention will fall-off (Cannon and Newble 2000, p. 68). [See Image 2]

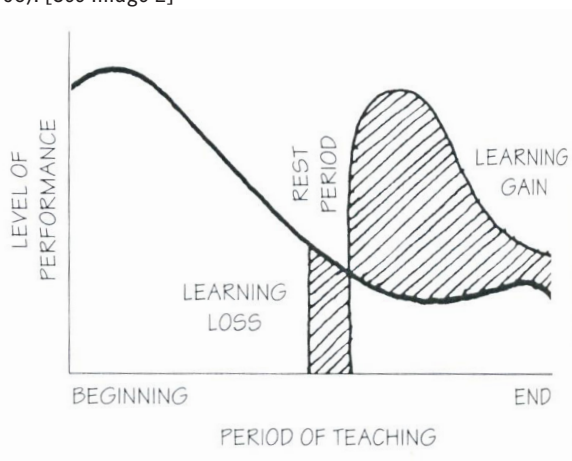


Image 2 demonstrates “Hypothesized pattern of student level of performance showing a progressive fall in attention and learning during an uninterrupted lecture and contrasting this with the gain obtained from introducing a rest period (after Bligh, 1998)”. (Cannon and Newble 2000, p. 68)

However, these arguments can be countered in turn. First of all, while it is true that the web-lectures do not provide any real interaction, this does not appear to trouble the students. In fact:

In a way I feel they [the web-lectures] are more personal, because you have this one-on-one talk. And I know it's not interactive, but I do feel, when I watch the web-lectures, you talk to *me*. I can click pause whenever I want, I can think about the content. When I'm in a lecture, I just sit there and I have to take in all this information, which I find quite hard. (International Design Student 2012)

And:

I actually find that when you watch the web-lectures that – because you also watch them at home; you are more focused – it comes across better than in class. [...] In some classes I learned till halfway what [the teacher] said, and then it became busy at the end. And then I thought, ‘what did he mean?’ when I was going through the PowerPoint [afterwards]. With a web-lecture you can always watch it again, “oh, this [is] was it [meant].” (International Management Student 2012)

⁴ According to Cannon and Newble (2000, pp. 3-5), there are three approaches to learning students can adopt: the surface approach, the deep approach and the strategic approach. The first approach is all about students “acquiring information by using mechanical memorization” and “then reproducing it on demand of a test”. The main focus here lies on “the course material and not on the meaning or purpose of the material”. When students adopt a deep approach, they are motivated by an interest in the subject matter and a need to interpret knowledge. The third approach is a combination of the two and depends on the student's motivation to obtain high grades and to compete with others. “The outcome is a variable level of understanding that depends on what is required by the course and, particularly, the assessments”.

Both quotes also indicate that, while they in fact illustrate all counterarguments in the context of in-class lectures, it is precisely the context of the web-lectures that prevents these events from happening. Nearly all fifteen students stated that the *TBB Fashion* web-lectures were beneficial for them, especially in comparison to the still traditional given *TBB Business* lectures. They especially liked the fact that they could watch the web-lectures in their own time, whenever they wanted. Some comments from students:

I thought it was great. That you can rewind, that you can make notes. That you are absolutely sure that you have completed the subject. And that you watch it in your own time.

-And when you feel like it. (Two Design Students 2012).

I like it very much.

-Yes, that you do it in your own tempo.

-That you can rewind whenever you misunderstand something. That you can view it in your own time. (Management Students 2012)

The web-lectures are convenient for us, because you have one week to watch it and if you miss it then it's online at the end. (International Branding Student 2012)

Naturally, there were also point students wanted to see improvement. During the first twelve months the web-lectures were only made available for one week: every week another web-lecture would be posted online, after which the previous lecture would be removed. The objective for this was that it would provide a structure for the students to keep up with the program, which traditional lectures generally inhere but web-lectures lack. However, while some student preferred this approach, others felt limited by it. An often-heard comment was in line of the following:

It is a shame that you cannot always watch the web-lectures; that they are only available for a limited period. I would like them to be available continuously. It is just convenient. Sometimes you are just really busy during the week and then it is just not convenient. Then you would be able to say, 'the coming two days I am going to watch web-lectures non-stop'. (International Management Student 2012)

Therefore, the *TBB Fashion* for the study year 2012-2013 has been refined with the students' evaluation taken into account. For instance, new web-lectures are still posted on a weekly basis but they remain available until immediately after the corresponding tutorial.

The fact that one has to 'perform' in front of a camera could be considered as another disadvantage. During traditional lectures a lecturer is generally aware of the environment: when students become restless, it is perhaps time to speed up, to slow down or to interact with them. The recording of web-lectures does not have this advantage – the only reference point is perhaps the cameraman; therefore, one should listen to one's intuition about how to proceed. Furthermore, it is also quite important to ooze confidence and enthusiasm, as nothing is probably more boring than watching a soporific person monotonously reel off a lecture. However, in its defense: is that not applicable to all forms of presentation?

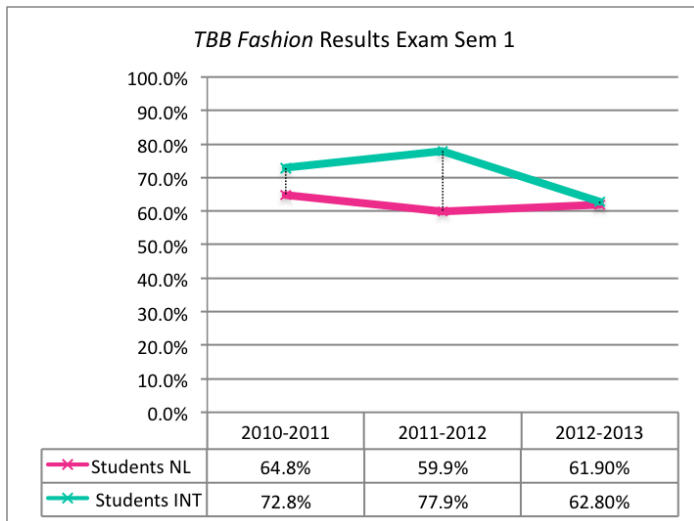
Finally, there is another very important advantage the new *TBB Fashion* provides: it ensures the preservation of expert knowledge. With this method AMFI is no longer dependent of the responsible lecturer, as was the case with the old *TBB Fashion*: the knowledge remains in-house.

Exam Results

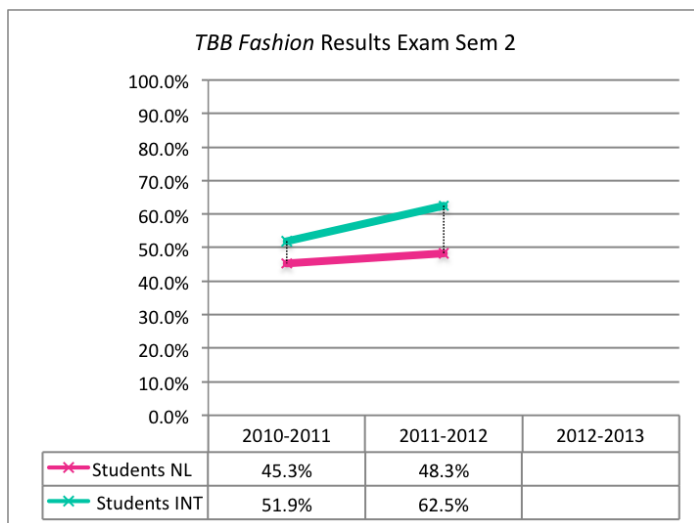
Because the new *TBB Fashion* has not yet run for two complete years, it is hard to analyze its success and effectiveness according to students' grades. Especially since, as with all new programs, it has been dealing with some growing pains due to various reasons. Nevertheless, it is relevant to provide some insight into the test results. Therefore, two comparisons have been made: a comparison between the old and new *TBB Fashion* over the course of 30 months; and a comparison between the *TBB Fashion*, old and new style, and the *TBB Business*, which has maintained its traditional form, over the course of 30 months.

Comparison of the old and new TBB Fashion

The first four graphs show the comparison between the exam results of the *TBB Fashion*, old and new style. In 2010-2011 the *TBB Fashion* run according to the original style and from 2011-2012 onwards it has run according to the new style.⁵ From graphs 1 and 2 can be deduced that the percentage of students who passed has been more or less the same. This does not necessarily indicate whether the new structure functions better, however, it affirms in any case that it works well.



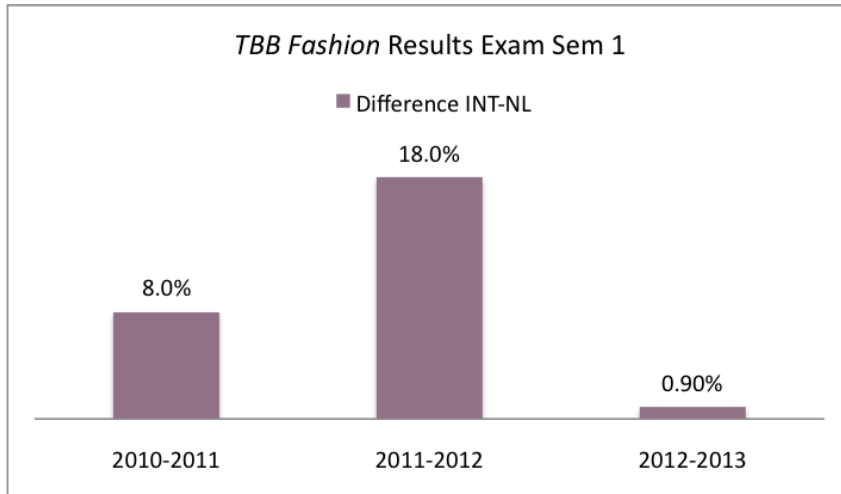
Graph 1 demonstrates the percentage of those who passed the *TBB Fashion* exams of the first semester



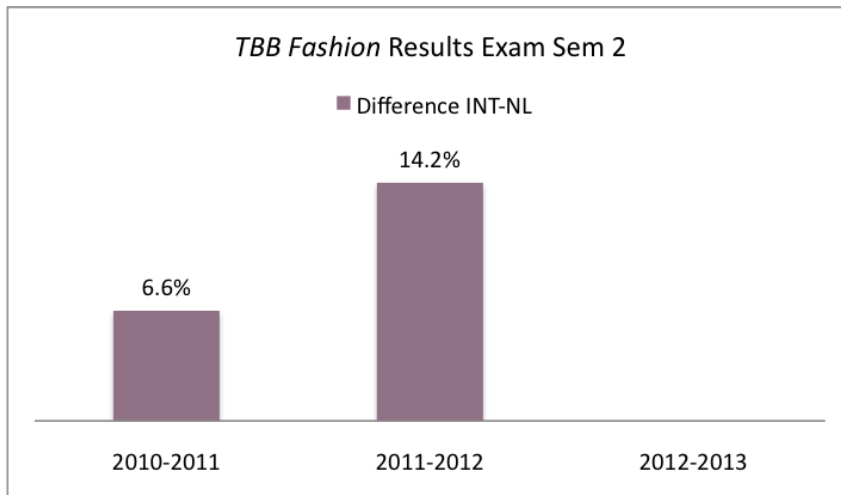
Graph 2 demonstrates the percentage of those who passed the *TBB Fashion* exams of the second semester

⁵ Note: these percentages have been modified. It happens that the cutting-score of exams are slightly adjusted in relation to the overall success rate of an exam, which depends on different external factors (illness of lecturer; the environment; availability; the content of the exam; etc). To be able to analyze the results fairly, this means that all results should be adjusted to the same standard and official cutting-score. Therefore, the data inserted in these graphs have, when necessary, been adjusted to the standard and official cutting-score. This means that the data presented in these graphs can divert from the official data concerning the success rate of the exams.

While the international success rate in the first semester of 2012-2013 has declined, after it had risen in both the first and second semester of 2011-2012, the difference between the international and national students has for the first time nearly completely disappeared [see Graphs 1,2,3]. This could be related to the fact that the construction has been refined since the beginning of the study year 2012-2013.



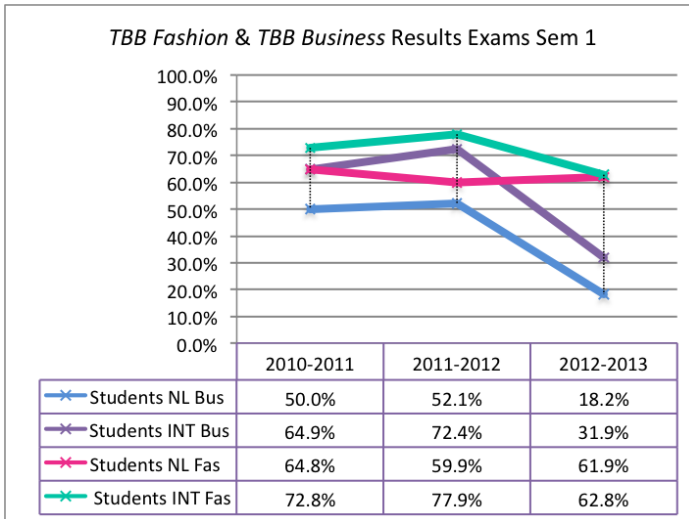
Graph 3 demonstrates the difference between international and national students who passed the *TBB Fashion* exams of the first semester in percentages



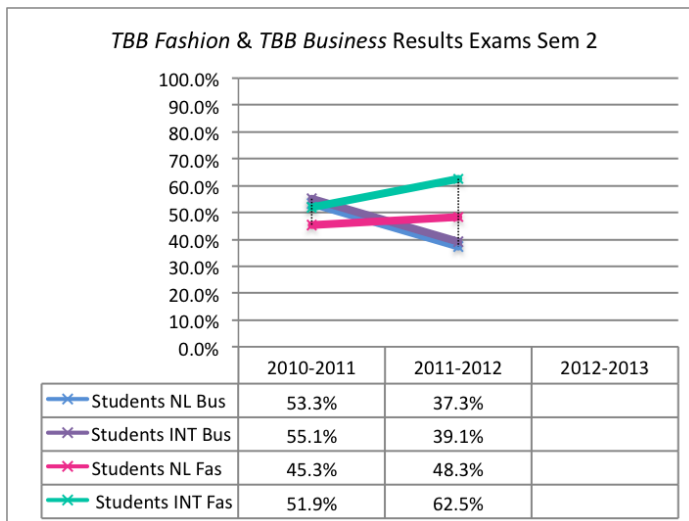
Graph 4 demonstrates the difference between international and national students who passed the *TBB Fashion* exams of the second semester in percentages

Comparison between the TBB Fashion, old and new, and the TBB Business

The following four graphs show the exam results of the *TBB Fashion*, old and new style, in comparison with the exam results of the *TBB Business*.⁶ From graphs 5 and 6 can be deduced that the percentage of students who passed *TBB Fashion* is generally higher than that of *TBB Business*, with the exception of the second semester of 2010-2011 when the old *TBB fashion* ran.



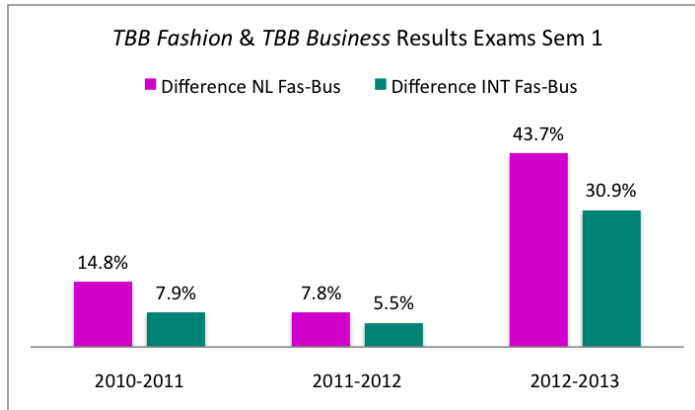
Graph 5 demonstrates the percentage of those who passed the *TBB Fashion* and *TBB Business* exams of the first semester



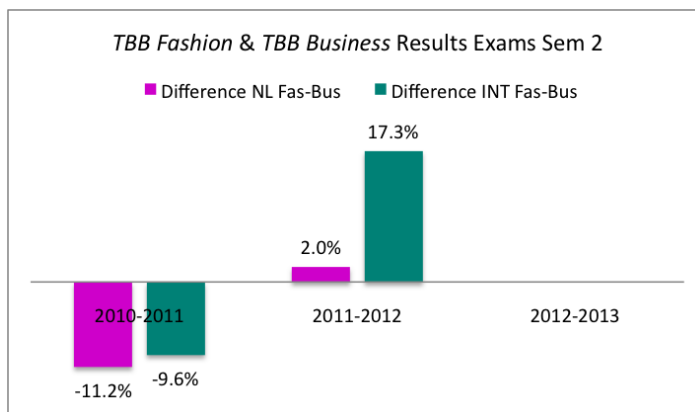
Graph 6 demonstrates the percentage of those who passed the *TBB Fashion* and *TBB Business* exams of the second semester

⁶ Note: these percentages have been modified. It happens that the cutting-score of exams are slightly adjusted in relation to the overall success rate of an exam, which depends on different external factors (illness of lecturer; the environment; availability; the content of the exam; etc). To be able to analyze the results fairly, this means that all results should be adjusted to the same standard and official cutting-score. Therefore, the data inserted in these graphs have, when necessary, been adjusted to the standard and official cutting-score. This means that the data presented in these graphs can divert from the official data concerning the success rate of the exams.

Furthermore, in the first semester of 2012-2013 the success rate of the *TBB fashion* exam lies for both national and international students remarkably higher (see Graph 7). Although this difference could be caused by different external factors, it is in any case remarkable that the *TBB Fashion*, being again in more refined form, should score that much higher in this specific semester.



Graph 7 demonstrates the difference between national students who passed the *TBB Fashion* and *TBB Business* exams of the first semester in percentages and the difference between international students



Graph 8 demonstrates the difference between national students who passed the *TBB Fashion* and *TBB Business* exams of the second semester in percentages and the difference between international students

In conclusion, this data set indicates that when it comes to exam results the new *TBB Fashion* is at least as successful as its predecessor.

Facility to share knowledge-resources between fashion institutes worldwide

For quite some years now initiatives like the Open University, the Khan Academy, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Coursera and EdX have demonstrated that education is changing quite revolutionary with the rise and development of (computer) technology. Associate Professor at the Open University, Robert Schuwer, finds it is time that universities start thinking about their value in this context (2012). And according to Wolter Mooi, professor at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, reflecting on online and digital developments within education, finds:

It is good for the competition between universities because students around the world can look up the best colleges. That keeps you, as an educator, sharp. In addition, it makes the classes you give public to the whole world. And surely that's also the point. (Mooi, 2012)

While AMFI is not distributing these *TBB Fashion* web-lectures publicly, the concept seems to be – in fashion terminology – rather ‘bang on trend’. And while it is also not (yet) AMFI’s intention to distribute them publicly, the database system offers the opportunity to share iconic knowledge-resources between fashion institutes worldwide.⁷ As there are so many wonderful experts specialized in different fields worldwide, it is such a shame that their knowledge generally remains within the borders of their habitat, because it is (too) costly and difficult to invite them for guest lectures in another country. Web-lectures are not limited by any physical borders and therefore raise the perfect opportunity to share expert knowledge from all over the world, which will not only enhance the content of courses given anywhere but also motivate students:

Guest lectures are also a good idea, because then you really get the professional input from a certain field. It is not just someone telling a story from their point of view, but someone who really know how it is.

- It would also raise more interest. (Two International Branding Students 2012)

In Conclusion

Fashion history is essential to both fashion practice and fashion theory. Unfortunately, it is quite a challenge to provide fashion history as a subject within practice-led fashion schools due to various reasons. Therefore the main question within this paper is: how to deal with the problems of flexibility and ‘experts’ of fashion history within fashion education?

A possible answer to this could be the new approach AMFI has developed to both education and the subject of fashion history. It consists of an innovative construction that provides knowledge on demand, while increasing students’ competencies. The use of web lectures in combination with assignments that require research and presentation skills activates students, which is how they learn best. Consequently, they do not only stay at Bloom’s level of knowledge reproduction but rise to the level of application and sometimes even to the level of analysis. Furthermore, it also creates opportunities for the lecturer. As AMFI’s director rightly observers:

It does not mean that lecturers are dismissed. No, it means that lecturers are mobilized differently: not to reel off information, but to look at education from another perspective. (Bouwman-Sarraf 2012)

Furthermore, in-depth interviews with students and test results have demonstrated that the construction functions well.

Finally, this new method provides an opportunity to facilitate the sharing of iconic knowledge-resources between fashion institutes around the world in order to enhance the quality of fashion education worldwide and to strengthen the global fashion education network.

⁷ Currently, the database only consists of fashion history related lectures, but it is likely that somewhere in the future it will be expand to other fields of expertise as well.

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Icons & New Technologies

- New technologies ranging from performance enhanced textiles for athletes to business strategies and new electronics.

VI.

Designing Innovative Icons to Represent Personal Information with Smart Clothing Technologies

Dr. Danying Yang & George K. Stylios Heriot-Watt University, United Kingdom

A Study of Mobile Marketing in the Fashion Industry

Ivonne Serna & Osmud Rahman Ryerson University, Canada

Designing Innovative Icons to Represent Personal Information with Smart Clothing Technologies

Dr. Danying Yang & George K. Stylios Heriot-Watt University, United Kingdom



Dr. Danying Yang

After her BA degree in fashion design, Danying started lecturer experience in 1999 of all fashion relevant courses at Wuhan Textile University in China and devoted to the research of inheritance and development of National Costumes, whilst took the mission as volunteer lecturer of teaching and demonstrating garment technology in Ethiopia from 2002 to 2004. In particular, she took the active role as a fashion designer in many creative activities from practical garment to experimental fashion.

With great passion in intelligent leading clothing/fashion associated with technological materials/textiles, Danying completed her PhD in 2012 and commenced her early career researcher in the creation and exploration of the area between fashion design and smart technology through the medium of textiles at Heriot-Watt University in the UK. She has engaged in the projects of photovoltaic and fiber optic technologies in the world of innovative mood-changing clothing design, and wearable information system for Soldier Health Monitoring (SHM) garment design.

Keywords: Smart Clothing, Wearable Technology, Fashionable Electronics, Physical and Psychological Information

Abstract

In the era of interdisciplinary research within fashion, textiles, electronics, information and other technologies, smart clothes and wearable technology is at the forefront of innovating the interface between the body and the environment. On the basis of highly-technical and multi-functional smart textiles, wearable technology and fashion electronics give clothing design the challenges, and is able to infuse the business with new blood and infinite longing, especially in developing intelligent wearable products for sports, medical and military uses. An emerging number of sportswear companies are now showing great interest in collaborative research projects with electronic engineers/programmers and textile/fashion designers [1], in order to intimately monitoring the physical and psychological information of athletes.

From the graphic symbol in the user interface to a visual presentation produced on a garment, how an iconic concept can denote the connotation of smart clothing between the wearer and the garment? In this paper, the hybrid skills are investigated from the perspective of tailor-made functionality and aesthetics based on the innovative “SmartWear” projects. A systems approach is followed from the concept of design through to the implementation of design with technology. Unlike the traditional presentation of icons, this systems approach can activate the development of new strategies to merge conventional images with smart electronics through E-textile interface. At the same time, this smart system can represent personal information through symbolic icons to consequently enrich the vitality of the business as a consolidated entity of fashion and technology.

Keywords

Smart Clothing, Wearable Technology, Fashionable Electronics, Physical and Psychological Information.

Introduction

As clothing interfaces between body and environment, new and innovative fabrics gave rise to epoch-making changes in clothing and fashion. Moving ahead of basic protection and beyond highly-technical and multi-functional performance, new technologies enable textiles to sense stimuli from the environment and respond, for instance; the application of shape memory textiles in climate-regulating garments [2]. These smart textiles having intelligent and communicative functions are being used in future fashion. Technically these novel functions require various specialities of textiles, electronics and telecommunications for smart clothing.

Among the number of applications, smart clothing with a health care system is mostly gaining the highest demand in the market [3]. Lately advances have been made to developing wearable technology and smart clothing further in physiological area to monitor basic vital signs of athletes, patients and soldiers, even in psychological area to regulate mood or read mind. The practice-based design projects highlighted in this paper have explored such technologies and specifically target at enhancing the lifecycle of smart clothing with the aim of developing a wearable smart system. With the successful outcomes of health monitoring garments and SMART mood changing fashion clothes, personal information has been sensed, processed and represented by clothing. Moving forward to sophisticated psychological cognition, the interaction of smart designs with brainwaves in a quest to design psycho clothes is under investigating.

Based on systematic design and technology approach with interdisciplinary context, these intelligent technologies are firstly proposed to be integrated and applied in creating a range of smart icons as dynamic user interface in this paper. Unlike the conventional symbolic design, innovative icons with smart concept are designed as the complement of our wearable smart system and an iconic flagship in the world of smart fashion business.

Design and Technology Innovation

Referencing the past and predicting the future, a variety of technologies are being used and developed to create fashion. New developments from traditional and modern fibers to innovative new fabrics, fashion designers have a large combination of materials to work with. As can be seen in the high tech fashion, technology has not only developed in the way of making or producing fabrics and clothing, but also extended to the wearable computing and information technology areas. These so-called wearable technology or fashion electronics are clothing and accessories incorporating microminiaturized electronic and computing technologies in a typical multidisciplinary approach of design and technology underpinned by textiles. With the rapid development in sensor technology, wearable technologies are emerging in prominence nowadays as one of the most advanced fields in the market.

Being close to the body, clothing enables the intimate interaction of the human with his/her environment. This interaction is necessary for computer intelligence to be used for context recognition or as an intuitive interface. Following the medical industry led SFIT (smart fabrics and intelligent textiles) sector, a substantial growth rate is forecast for the health/fitness sector applied in athletic and military areas with the functions as biophysical monitoring (heart rate, ECG, temperatures, moisture, etc.), amusement (music, games), positioning (GPS), motion monitoring or muscle actuation, communication, etc. [4]. The real commercial breakthrough of wearable technology products applied in sportswear and accessories can be seen in the companies as Nike, Adidas, Phillips, NuMetrex, SmartLife, etc. For example, Nike [5] and Adidas [6] have shown their innovative sensor-based smart sports clothing and accessories to measure the vital signals of body through the sensor equipped in.

“SmartWear” projects

Good design and technology should be investigated at the early stages of conceiving the creation of an idea. Smart clothing is a typical consequence of the collaboration of clothing design and electronic technology. When high-tech meets high-fashion, every design ought to incorporate practical functions and features as well as having a fine and fashionable look.

In the field of intelligent clothing, more complex innovations and high technology play a crucial role. Presently, much research has been carried out using E-textiles, also known as electronic textiles, incorporating smart wearable technologies. These fabrics enable active communication via embedded digital components, miniature electronics and portable computers [7]. E-textiles become the key interface between wearable technology and smart clothing. On the basis of the review and reappraisal of material fabrication, clothing design, fashionable electronics, sensor technology and information engineering, a series of “SmartWear” projects has been investigated, designed and developed. A set of miniature sensors and electronics with high performance to be equipped within the clothes were efficiently developed. The bulky and constrained wire-based connections seen in previous smart clothing have been eliminated by using special conductive fabric interlining for preferable flexibility and appearance, optimal wearability and comfort.

How these technologies are being constructed and integrated into clothing aesthetically is the challenge. Wearable electronics should blend well with the garment design and have unobtrusive connections with the textile fabric parts. The aim of these projects is to create fashionable smart clothing with integration of electronic and information technologies. Then the intelligent clothing/fashion/couture as a carrier of the smart system, should build a very intimate relationship of interacting between human and device. Fashion plays a crucial role in multi-functionality using high technologies to reflect environmental issues from



George K. Stylios

George comes from a textile business background in Greece and studied in the UK. He completed his postgraduate studies in Leeds and then went onto his MSc and PhD, which were funded by M&S and their suppliers. George completed his PhD in 1986 and became a lecturer in clothing at Bradford, and he became a fellow of the Science and Technology Agency in Japan in 1991 before returning to Bradford in 1992. He obtained his personal chair in industrial engineering systems at Bradford in 1994 whilst continuing research in textile objective measurement applied at the textile and clothing interface.

In 1999 George joined the School of Textiles and Design as Professor of Textiles and is currently Director of TechniTex and the Faraday Partnership in Technical Textiles. He has always been interested in the interface between textiles and clothing from a number of aspects and has centred the majority of his research around this area, bringing in sensors, control engineering and machine design.

physical and psychological information. “SmartWear” projects have integrated design with technology for the creation and development of a smart clothing system without any compromise of its aesthetics.

“SmartWear” I - Wearable Information Garment System WIGS For Health Monitoring

The aim of this project is to research and develop a prototyping wearable electronic garment system for replacement of the common T-shirt or vest in the health and sportswear sector. The garment system is capable of carrying out the following health monitoring activities: Temperature, Breathing, ECG and GPS (Figure 2). The WIGS consists of a Communications Centre and sensor nodes attached at specific positions on the fabric structure and integrated into the garment design, as shown in Figure 1. The design of prototype and device of smart clothing in this research is consisted based on analyzing the proceeding research and information technology. Care has been taken to design a shirt and a vest compatible with the preferences of the wearer. To that effect, careful investigation and implementation of garment components (yarn, fabric structure, seams and coating), garment design with sensor positioning and prototype sizing, as well as feasible and preferable garment making technologies have been taken into consideration.



Figure 1 WIGS T-shirt and vest

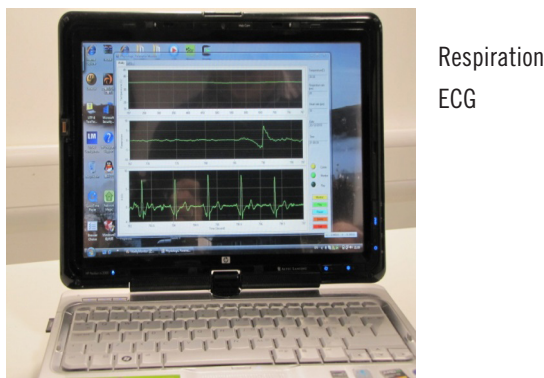


Figure 2 WIGS wireless Health Monitoring output

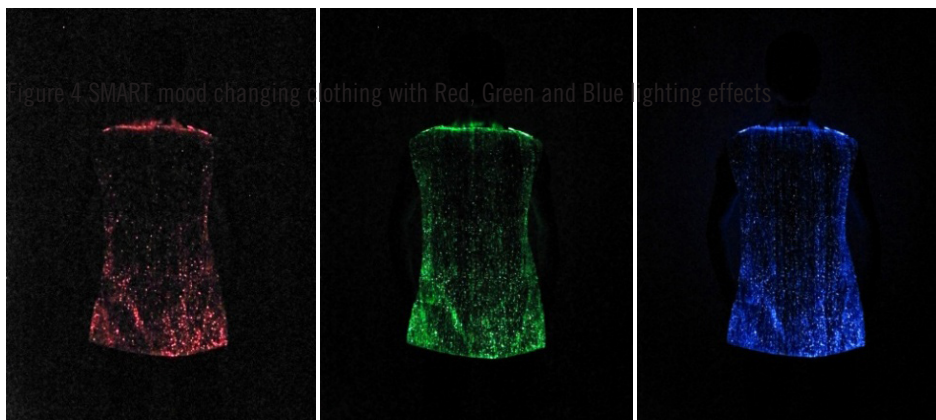
“SmartWear” D - The Concept of Mood Changing Garments Made From Luminescent Woven Fabrics and Flexible Photovoltaics

A collection of high fashion clothes has been designed and made up which have a number of SMART characteristics from energy harvesting to mood changing, as shown in Figure 3. Mood, to be defined as biopsychological in nature, is the general index of both physiological functions and psychological experiences [8]. This work, for the first time, has realized the important concept of how a photonic, highly fashionable garment, can respond to the mood of the wearer through the colour lighting changes induced by sound, as shown in Figure 4, entirely powered by a solar system and by careful incorporation of all in the design

architecture of the garment. The harvested solar power is stored and it is also useful for mobile devices. The use of textile based conductive materials and special fasteners together with conventional textiles and their blending with wearable technologies, made this smart garment collection a couture fashion piece and has proved that technologists and designers can work together, showing what creation and knowledge can achieve.



Figure 3 SMART suit of energy harvesting and mood changing photonic clothes



“SmartWear” Đ - Intelligent Psychological Clothing and Accessories with Pattern, Colour and Shape Changes

After the successful implementation of mood changing technology in “SmartWear” Đ, an advanced relationship of the effect of this system on the mood of the wearer can be realized by using a portable EEG and detecting directly the activity of the user’s brain. By picking up the brainwave signals and converting them into visible actions, a range of clothing and accessory items can be created for mind control applications and presented with colour, pattern or shape changes. For instance, in an even higher intelligent level, people can control to change the colour of their clothing or accessories by brain directive or adapt to environment like chameleons change their skin colours. Such technology has been researched and is under the investigating and implementing, through some way be more challenging.

Systems Approach in Creative Icon Design

When a series of smart technologies is being applied to textiles and clothing, how will fashion convey the idea to pilot and change the way we dress in the future? For business strategies, fashion communication is as important as fashion design. From this perspective, graphic design and advertising art can aid in selling

a product or an idea through effective visual communication. As the conveyance of ideas and information in forms of being read or looked upon to its audience, communication design is applied to products and elements of company identity as logos, symbols, icons or any other features that identify one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers.

Conventionally, icons seem to be only the representation of products or identity of the business, but with less or indirectly connection with the end-users. Strategic considerations need to be taken into account with icon design. For example, some brands which having aspects that contribute to consumer's self-expression and personal identity have a strong identity that they become more or less cultural icons which makes them "iconic brands", such as Apple and Nike. It was indicated that icons alone are meaningless without a particular context and an inherent function of the person (interpretant) or "culture" with the following relationship [9]:

$$Icon_j + Context_j + Viewer (or interpretant)_k = Meaning_{ijk}$$

In this relationship, the effective representation of icons depends on *what* is presented, *how* it is presented and to *whom* it is presented. This thereby implying the icon design practice is more artistic than scientific [10].

As a creative process of designing a graphic symbol that represents some real, fantasy or abstract motive, entity or action, icon design rapidly grew in usage after the commencement of the information age. Since the early 1970s, icons have come to present a great deal of information precisely with the broader meaning of both representational images and visual symbols, and convey information in a universal fashion that allows users to interact with new applications, systems and devices immediately, especially in graphical user interfaces. [8] [11] [12] With the evolution of computing and information technologies, iconic communication has become a successful method for visually representing functionality. Nevertheless, as an integral for human's cognition, several non-visual iconographic forms exist, which are also powerful. For instance, using sound as an alternative communication channel, the auditory icons also called "Earcons", have been explored as the aural counterparts of icons [8]. In addition, "Hapticons", as the name suggested, convey iconic information haptically, with the role of communicating a simple idea in manner similar to visual or auditory icons [13]. Furthermore, in contrast to static graphical icons and icons with animated graphics, the new type of iconographic scheme is also explored for graphical user interfaces based on motion, to be referred as "Kineticons" [14].

As can be seen, icon design, as part of communicating presentation, is also undergoing some sort of change with state-of-the-art technology. The synergism between design and technology is underpinned throughout the process of innovating an icon, the same as to create SMART clothing, as shown in Figure 5.

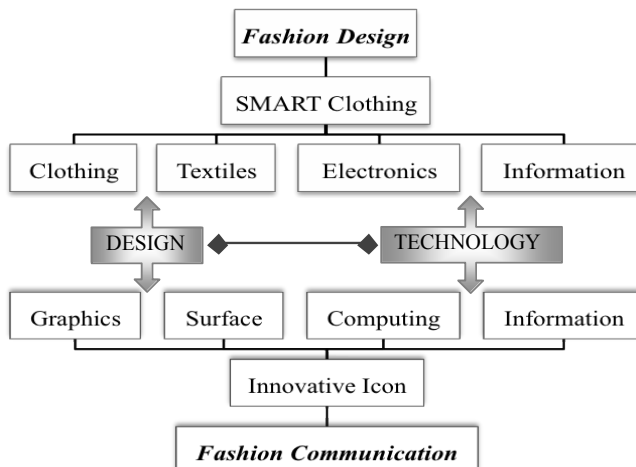


Figure 5 Systems approach in both Fashion Design and Fashion Communication

The ultimate purpose of design and technology integration, as a systems approach, is to fulfill the human needs and enrich the human's daily life. Whatever fashion changes, the essence of fashion design is to allow people expressing themselves through clothing affecting the unconscious mind, to express their personality and explore the profoundness of wear. Accordingly, we say people are the core of fashion. To fashion communication, the use of iconic representation is conducive to improving product model understanding because graphical icons essentially have become part of our daily lives. Icons are well-known to be the emblem of the business. Like the name of humankind, clothing could also be symbolized in fashion business. For example, the 'Swoosh' is one of the most recognized brand logos in the world, as the symbol of the athletic shoe and clothing manufacturer Nike [15]. In respect of the application of user-centered design, these visual communications generate cohesive, predictive and desirable designs based on holistic consideration of user's experience. Therefore, instead of a mere symbolic image, the connotation of icons directly relates to the core of fashion in addressing the user's experience to fashion business, as shown in Figure 6.

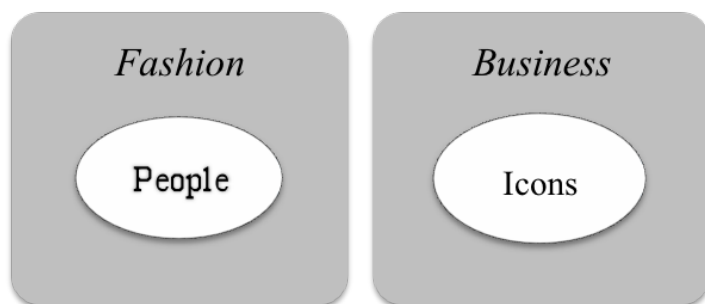


Figure 6 Connotation of icons in addressing the user's experience to fashion business

“SmartIcon” design

In this paper, we present the design and technology of an innovative graphical interface in the form of icons for our “SmartWear” system, in order to give cognitive perspective on how to represent the new look-and-feel of the user interface, as well as to create effective visual communication in marrying arts and science. To realize the innovative concept of icons, design/technology is implemented as applied in the smart clothing system. Technology implementation shows to what extent technical development is possible, while design implementation presents the usability and aesthetic properties of the whole system. A systems approach is used in all design and technology developments, in place of fragmented add-ons of technology to conventional carrier. In this approach, aesthetics and functionality have been fused in harmony for the end-user. From design inspiration to technology innovation, this inventive research was undertaken as a concept and could be realized through a creative process by integrating design and technology into a range of fashionable smart clothing icons. Additionally, the systematic approach to innovative design requires tools that allow people without engineering background having closer participation in the creative process, thus broadening and enriching the area [13]. The colour lighting, with its intuitive physical and psychological approaches, is such a powerful tool for communication applied in our innovative icon design.

In accordance with our “SmartWear” projects, collective icons are designed and represented as below, to correspond with functional garments and intelligent technologies infused.

“SmartIcon” D - “WeWear”

According to our health monitoring Wearable Information Garment System WIGS, an icon called “WeWear” is designed with colour-changing materials built in sportswear to represent the basic vital signs of athletes with feedback during the training, as shown in Table 1 with pulse rate examples.

Pulse Rate (times/min)	Colour Changing Icon (daytime)	Colour Changing Icon (nighttime)	Training Feedback
>140			Negative
90~140			Normal
< 90			Positive

Table 1 “WeWear” icon design for health monitoring garments

“SmartIcon” Ծ - “MoodWear”

We name our sound induced SMART Mood Changing Garments as “MoodWear”, with icon design shown in Table 2. With thermochromic or electroluminescent materials, our mood states can be represented not only by clothing but also through an icon. Moreover, colour of the icon can also be a designed feature to indicate the charging status of our integrated solar power harvesting system.

Sound Volume	Colour Changing Icon (daytime)	Colour Changing Icon (nighttime)	Mood States
High			Happy or Angry
Moderate			Normal
Low			Sad or Calm

Table 2 “MoodWear” icon design for SMART mood changing clothes

“SmartIcon” Ծ - “PsychoWear”

As far as colour is concerned, its physical and psychological factors further inspire the innovative part of our future research conception “PsychoWear”, as shown in Table 3. The icon is conceived at the interface between human with clothing and accessories, intelligently delivering psychological information.

Brainwave Bands (1-20 Hz)	Colour Changing Icon (daytime)	Colour Changing Icon (nighttime)	Brain Activities
Higher			Active, Busy, Concentration, Anxious thinking
Middle			Relax, Reflecting, Inhibition Control
Lower			Drowsiness, Idling, Inhibition with elicited response

Table 3 “PsychoWear” icon design for psychological clothing and accessories

This series of innovative icon design has specifically embodied technical textiles, new electronics and intelligent technologies, which have been applied in our smart clothing prototypes. As the iconic smart clothing business models, they show the unconventional ideas and attitude to break from the traditional images and symbols. With the sensing and responding functions, these icons not only represent the image-building and connotation of the SMART fashion business, but also present personal information of the user with intelligent and intimate communication interface. Thereby not only the business, but also the customers become icon itself.

Conclusion and Future Work

In this paper, with new technology and by systematic design, we proposed an innovative icon concept in conjunction with our smart clothing system to form an integral fashion entity. Design and technology integration are investigated and presented in twofold; one is smart clothing design, another is corresponding icon design, with cotemporary technologies extended to the wearable computing and information areas. To present our iconic conceptualization in the area of interdisciplinary research, smart electronics through E-textile interface have aided our research in visual iconography and presented an innovative approach for generating and rendering personal information on smart clothing.

Clearly, our innovative icon research is still at the conceptual and explorative stages. Along with the technology development and interdisciplinary collaboration, our forthcoming research in innovative icon design will continue to be developed. Smart sensing and responding technologies can further to fuse with visual, auditory, haptic and kinetic iconographic schemes to represent the diversity in fashion.

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A Study of Mobile Marketing in the Fashion Industry

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Abstract

Mobile marketing is defined as “the use of wireless media as an integrated content delivery and direct response vehicle within a cross-media or standalone marketing communications program” (Mobile Marketing Association 2008).

The mobile device industry has been transformed rapidly over the last ten years. The world is swiftly adopting mobile devices. Google is now activating 1.3 million Android devices per day, this is up from 900,000 in July 2012 (Eric Schmidt, 2012). The overarching objective of this research is intended to help apparel retailers understand more about apparel consumers regarding their usage of mobile devices as well as their perceptions toward mobile marketing strategies. We believe that the results of this study will not only enrich our understanding of mobile users, but also shed light on better business practices and a model for mobile fashion marketing.

Mobile fashion marketing is still at its infancy stage, further research is needed to explore how this relatively new medium can be utilized in order to enhance brand awareness, loyalty and profit. The purpose of this research study is threefold: (1) to gain a deeper understanding of how consumers perceive mobile marketing, (2) to explore and identify the potential of mobile marketing targeted for end users, (3) to offer insights and recommendations to apparel retailers on mobile marketing’s mix and strategy.

A quantitative research method will be employed, and cross-sectional, descriptive research along with non-probabilistic sampling techniques are being used for this study. A questionnaire survey has been designed and developed to collect data among mobile device users.

Through this study, fashion retailers will gain a deeper understanding of the following aspects: consumer’s attitudes towards online apparel purchase decisions, the significant role of mobile social media in the context of apparel purchase, perceptions of location-based mobile services, and m-commerce. The anticipated outcome is to provide statistical information on Canadian consumer’s perceptions and behavior regarding the usage of mobile device and the communication platforms. We believe that this study will generate meaningful and current information for apparel retailers to enhance their customer relationship management (CRM) strategy through the utilization of mobile devices as a marketing and communication tool.

The mobile device industry has seen a dramatic transformation over the last ten years: people across the globe have swiftly adopted the use of smart phones, tablets and other related devices and begun to see them as a necessity for their everyday lives. As of September 2012, Android was activating 1.3 million devices per day as compared to only 700,000 in December, 2011 (Schmidt, 2012). Due to the tremendous growth of mobile users, the objective of our research is to gain a deeper understanding of how consumers perceive and respond to mobile fashion marketing strategies.

Mobile fashion marketing is still in a stage of infancy and further research is needed to explore how this relatively new technology can be used in order to enhance brand awareness, loyalty and profit. The objectives of this research study are threefold: (1) to gain a deeper understanding of consumers’ perceptions toward mobile shopping and marketing; (2) to explore and identify the potential of business to consumer (B2C) mobile marketing; and (3) to obtain a clearer picture about the mix of mobile fashion marketing strategies that are available today.

The results of this study will not only enrich our understanding of mobile device use by apparel shoppers, but also assist fashion marketers and retailers in developing effective mobile-marketing strategies. Specifically, the findings will help fashion retailers to gain a deeper understanding of the following aspects



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Keywords: m-commerce, mobile marketing, consumer perception and behavior, apparel shopping, social networking



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Over the last few years, he has written and disseminated a number of research projects include consumers' aspirations and perceptions of denim jeans, a study of young consumers' shopping attitudes toward pyjamas; tripartite relationships between designer, consumer and product; and fashion design in the digital age. Apart from the studies of fashion design and consumption, Osmud is also interested in fashion subculture. His recent research on Lolita and Cosplay has led him to publish "Lolita – Imaginative Self and Elusive Consumption" and "Cosplay – Imaginative Self and Performing Identity" in *Fashion Theory*. Currently, he is working on several cross-cultural collaborative projects on consumer behavior and fashion consumption of high-involvement and low-involvement apparel products.

of mobile marketing: consumer attitudes towards online apparel purchasing decisions; the significance of the role of mobile social media in the context of apparel purchases; consumer perceptions of location-based mobile services; and information about mobile commerce (m-commerce). The overarching goal is to provide statistical information on consumer perceptions and behaviour regarding the usage of mobile devices and communication platforms.

Introduction

In his keynote speech at the Mobile World Conference in Barcelona in early 2012, Eric Schmidt, executive chairman of Google, announced that the total number of Android activations had surpassed 300 million worldwide, and the daily activation rate had reached 850,000 devices (Mobile World Live, 2012). Clearly, the use of mobile devices (including the smartphone, traditional cellphone and tablet) has increased rapidly over the last ten years. It is apparent that mobile devices have already made inroads towards replacing a wide range of devices including the landline phone, audio/video recorder, camera, calculator, alarm clock, MP3 music player, computer desktop and laptop (Miller, 2012). As reported by Flurry Analytics, smartphones and tablets have become the fastest adopted technology in history; they were adopted faster than electricity, televisions, microwaves, personal computers, cell phones and the Internet (Farago 2012). This changing phenomenon is largely due to technological advancements, including faster data transmission and connectivity, more computing memory and capacity, better user interface, enhanced data storage and the "cloud" technology, to name a few (Rajnish et al., 2006). Internet giants such as Google, Amazon and Microsoft are looking at mobile as a way to break out of the fixed Internet (Wisely, 2009). By the end of 2012 there will be more mobile devices on the planet than people, according to the forecasts from Cisco (2012).

It is not uncommon for people to now own multiple mobile devices to serve different needs and purposes. For instance, people may use a smartphone for information searches and communication, and an iPad for reading and social networking. Clearly, mobile technology has changed and revolutionized how people communicate and behave, and it opens up new opportunities for many companies to communicate with their consumers through Internet marketing and social networking. As Cindy Krum (2010) described, "When text-based communication lost its ties to the traditional computer, it opened up a world of marketing opportunities, it provided recipients the opportunity to consume our message when it was convenient for them and to save it or carry it with them for future reference."

Definitions, Rationales and Objectives

Mobile commerce (m-commerce) can be considered as an extension of electronic commerce (e-commerce) to wireless media or wireless communication networks (Rajnish et al., 2006; Zhang et al., 2012). According to the Mobile Marketing Association (MMA, 2008), mobile marketing (m-marketing) is defined as "the use of wireless media as an integrated content delivery and direct response vehicle within a cross-media or standalone marketing communications program." M-marketing enables retailers to deliver customized or personalized information to target the mobile users in real-time interactions. From the business perspective, m-commerce indeed is an integral subset of e-business, which includes buying and selling products/services over the Web such as mobile shopping, mobile banking and other location-based services. In order to boost the market performance, many e-retailers have been employing multiple channels (including m-commerce) and various strategies to promote their products. For example, major apparel retailers such as The Gap and Macy's offer their customers the option to engage in m-commerce through their mobile-optimized websites. To gain a better understanding of m-commerce from the consumers' or mobile users' perspectives, a number of questions were posed to guide and direct this study: Do shoppers embrace online shopping? Should apparel retailers shift or extend their online offerings to include mobile commerce? To what extent are shoppers willing to use their mobile devices for apparel purchase?

Although mobile marketing research has been undertaken in recent years, this type of research is still in its infancy (Yang, 2010; Zhang et al., 2012). Several prior studies have pointed out that mobile services so far have not successfully captured and attracted the consumers (AlHinai et al., 2010). In other words, it

Keywords: Corporate Social Responsibility, Textile and Garment industry, responsible business, sustainable business, ethical sourcing, Bangalore

remains unclear to what extent consumers are willing to adapt and engage in m-commerce. Therefore, it is meaningful and worthwhile to investigate this particular topic.

The objectives of this research study are threefold: (1) to gain a deeper understanding of consumers' perceptions toward mobile shopping and marketing; (2) to explore and identify the potential of business to consumer (B2C) mobile marketing; and (3) to obtain a clearer picture about the mix of mobile fashion marketing strategies that are available today. Smartphones and tablets were the primary focus of the current study due to the popularity of these products. The ultimate goal is to provide insights and possible recommendations to Canadian apparel retailers on online marketing and communication strategies. We believe that the more retailers understand their consumers' shopping behaviour, the more effectively they can communicate with them.

The next section of this paper reviews the literature related to online shopping and m-commerce. In the following section, the underlying ideas of our research method and measuring instruments for the current study are presented. In the section after that, we report the findings and results of the study. This is followed by a discussion of managerial implications and conclusions. We conclude this article with research limitations and recommendation for future research.

Literature Review

From Mail-Order Shopping to Online Shopping

Apart from the traditional bricks-and-mortar stores, shopping channels such as mail-order and e-retailing provide not merely alternatives but also convenience to shoppers. According to Swaminathan et al. (1999), convenience plays a significant role in shopping, and those who are primarily motivated by convenience are more likely to shop and purchase online. Kukar-Kinney et al. (2009) found that compulsive shoppers favour online over in-person shopping because they prefer shopping according to their own pace without other shoppers around. In addition, consumers who had mail-order shopping experience tended to have a higher propensity for purchasing apparel products online than those who had no such experience (Shim & Drake, 1990). Other than convenience and prior experience, the trust, payment security and service of the company also play a critical part in e-shopping (Ha & Stoel, 2009). In order to understand how mobile users involve and engage in online apparel shopping, consumer behaviour and experience were examined and discussed in this study.

Multi-Channel Strategy

Effective mobile marketing can create a seamless experience for the customer – going from the retailer's Internet website, to the mobile e-commerce (or m-commerce) website, to the bricks-and-mortar store (in-store experience). Rangaswamy and Van Bruggen (2005) explain that many retailers strategically offer a combination of different channels including physical stores, catalogues, call centres and e-commerce sites. Offering multiple channels deem to be imperative for many retailers to sustain their competitiveness. Pookulangara et al. (2010) studied how attitudes and subjective norms predicted migration across the three channels (bricks-and-mortar stores, catalogues and the Internet). They found that retailers need to pay more attention to the "social influence." They observed that consumers use aids such as blogs, customer-generated reviews, or e-word-of-mouth to make their shopping decisions. Another study of multi-channel conducted by Hahn and Kim (2009) also revealed the desire of consumers to use Internet for shopping because of the flexibility and accessibility of product and store information. Indeed, people often use online information to facilitate their offline activities. In addition, Weltevreden and Boschma (2008) found that established high-street retailers could improve customer relationships and enhance promotional exposure with online ventures. In other words, the leading edge retailers with the most sophisticated websites are most likely to yield the greatest comparative advantages.

Online Information – Product Attributes

It is evident that many prior research studies of Internet-based retailing (Citrin et al., 2003; Lester et al., 2005; Rahman, 2012) suggests that consumers may feel disappointed if they are not able to obtain sufficient product or product-related information online. In many cases, consumers rely on a wide array of attributes to evaluate the quality of a product as well as to compare a product to similar alternatives. Therefore, it is important to understand what product attributes may play a relatively significant role in the process of apparel selection and evaluation. According to the results of our literature review and pilot study, we identified and proposed nine relevant product cues for this study: availability of colour; materials; price; availability of sizes; style; country-of-origin; ease of care; technical performance; and customers' online reviews.

Age Cohorts and Gender Factor

Age is an important factor affecting consumers' technology usage and its acceptance (McFarland, 2001; Yang & Folly, 2008). As Fife and Pereira (2005) point out, consumer perception of usability of a mobile data service can be greatly shaped by age, level of education and technological readiness and exposure. For example, younger consumers ("Gen Xers") tend to adopt computer and mobile technology more than their older counterparts ("Baby Boomers") (Morris & Venkatesh, 2000; Schadler, 2006; Yang & Folly, 2008) because they were exposed to computers and Internet at a relatively early age. Apart from age, gender may also play a significant role in mobile shopping, particularly for apparel products. In general, female consumers are relatively more involved in fashion than males, and show greater sensitivity towards clothing cues than men (Auty & Elliott, 1998; Beaudoin et al., 2003; Moss, 2009). Thus, it is reasonable to propose that female consumers are more likely to engage in apparel shopping through mobile devices. In order to understand the impact of age and gender, comparative analysis was used to present the similarities and variances in the current study.

Research Method

Subject

Adult males and females (18 years or older) were recruited for the study in the Greater Toronto Area. Subjects were required to be computer/Internet-literate. Toronto was chosen for two reasons: (1) it is a cosmopolitan city which offers an important cultural convergence point; and (2) the population of mobile users is relatively high as compared to other cities in Canada. Due to the computer/Internet literacy of our target subjects, it was logical to employ an online survey for the present study, and a self-administered online survey was designed and developed. Online surveys offer a number of advantages over paper surveys including lower financial costs, reduced coding time, fewer coding errors and more convenience for the participants (Kang & Park-Poaps, 2010).

According to Malhotra (2007), a sample size between 300 and 500 is acceptable, and the sample size of this study was 464 which was therefore deemed to be sufficient. In total, the survey consisted of 49 questions and they were grouped into three sections: mobile user behaviour; consumer perception and experience (including examination of apparel attributes and fashion information source); and demographic profile. Likert scale, nominal and ordinal questions were used throughout the survey. Prior to data collection, ten pre-tests were conducted to assess the applicability and efficacy of the measuring instruments. Based on the results and observations of the pre-test, minor revisions were made. In order to understand the consumers' behaviour and perception toward mobile-commerce, *t*-test, correlation and descriptive analysis were also used.

Findings and Results

A total of 464 respondents took part in this study. A significant majority (54.92%) of the respondents was female. Of these, 156 respondents fell into the segment ranging from 18 to 24 years of age ($n=28$, 23.1%

male; n=128, 37.4% female), and 91 respondents belonged to the segment of ages 25 to 34 years (n=34, 28.1% male, n=57, 16.7% female), as indicated in Table 1.

Among participants in our findings, iPhone was the most popular mobile device, followed by iPad and Blackberry. In total, 65.98% (n=322) of the respondents subscribed to a data plan and 12.91% (n=63) reported that they only accessed Internet through Wi-Fi.

Sex	n	%
Male	120	24.59
Female	268	54.92
Age		
18-24	156	31.97
25-34	91	18.65
35-44	95	19.47
45-54	30	6.15
55 and up	17	3.48
Income		
Less than 30,000	115	23.57
30,000-60,000	70	14.34
60,000-90,000	46	9.43
90,000-120,000	26	5.33
120,000-150,000	22	4.51
150,000 or above	32	6.56
Race		
White/ Caucasian	149	30.53
Hispanic/ Latin	112	22.95
Asian/ Oriental	74	15.16

Table 1: Demographic profile of study sample

Mobile Usage and Purchase

As indicated in Table 2, most of the respondents used their mobile devices for phone calls. However, female respondents tended to use their devices more frequently for text messaging (80.4%) and for taking photographs (76.9%) than their male counterparts. On the other hand, males liked to use their devices for e-mailing (82.6%) and Internet browsing (78.5%).

	Female		Top 5	Male		Top 5
	Frequency	Percentage		Frequency	Percentage	
Play games	161	47.1		58	47.9	
Browse the Internet	250	73.1	5	95	78.5	3
Listen to music	197	57.6		68	56.2	
Use apps	187	54.7		73	60.3	
Watch videos	155	45.3		66	54.5	
Text messaging	275	80.4	2	93	76.9	4
Take photos/sharing them	263	76.9	3	82	67.8	
E-mail	262	76.6	4	100	82.6	2
Social media	248	72.5		86	71.1	
Maps/directions	212	62.0		87	71.9	5
News/weather/traffic/sports	178	52.0		76	62.8	
Read a book	89	26.0		44	36.4	
Read blogs	95	27.8		37	30.6	
Scan QR code/bar code	47	13.7		25	20.7	
Compare items/prices	56	16.4		26	21.5	
Translator	63	18.4		28	23.1	
Phone calls	303	88.6	1	105	86.8	1
Others	8	2.3		3	2.5	

Table 2: Usage of mobile phone – gender difference

In terms of m-commerce or m-purchase, 53% of the respondents reported that they used smartphones and tablets to purchase apps (40%), followed by music (30%), movie tickets (23%), pizza (8%) and coffee (5%). Although over 50% of the respondents used mobile devices to buy different products and services, a large number of respondents (47%) expressed that they never made any purchases through their mobile devices (as indicated in Table 3). The reasons why they didn't use their mobile devices for purchase can be summarized into seven areas: (1) unnecessary; (2) privacy and security concerns; (3) unable to consume immediately; (4) uncomfortable; (5) unfamiliar with m-commerce; (6) difficult to engage in transaction process; and (7) shipping cost and inconvenience to return.

Shopping Channels

Our results clearly illustrated that the vast majority of the respondents prefer shopping at the bricks-and-mortar store over other channels. The possible explanation is that many respondents would like to touch and feel the fabric as well as to try on the garments prior to their purchase. Although mobile shopping was not fully embraced by our respondents (only 8%), we believe that the shopping paradigm is shifting or expanding (bricks-and-mortar & online & mobile). For example, 46% of our respondents indicated that they have experience on online purchase even though they were not using their mobile devices for those transactions. As shown in Table 3, there are no significant differences between genders in terms of their preferences, except that the outlet store was deemed to be more important to males whereas the retailer website was relatively more important to females.

	Female			Male		
	Frequency	Percentage	Top 3	Frequency	Percentage	Top 3
Regular retail store	290	84.8	1	115	95.0	1
Outlet store	178	52.0	2	75	62.0	2
Retailer website	149	43.6	3	47	38.8	3
Retail mobile website	27	7.9		9	7.4	
Printed catalogue	17	5.0		4	3.3	
Phone	8	2.3		2	1.7	
TV	4	1.2		0	0	
Other	9	2.6		2	1.7	

Table 3: Significance of shopping channel

Quick-Response (QR) Code Application

QR code is a two dimensional matrix symbology barcode that contains position-detection patterns with embedded data including product/service/company information (Kato et al., 2010). Smartphone users can scan these codes using their camera, and it will instantly lead them to the relevant Uniform Resource Locator (URL) addresses which can link to a website, an online video, or an audio file, among other uses.

Apparel retailers such as Columbia Sportswear and Timberland have been using QR codes on their merchandise hangtags. Interestingly, in our study 70% of respondents indicated that they were familiar with QR codes and 43% of respondents had downloaded a QR code app (scanner or reader application) on their mobile device. Only 38% did not have a QR code app on their mobile device and 18% were not sure if they had a QR code app installed on their mobile device

Mobile Apparel Shopping – Significance Selection Criteria

As shown in Table 4, in making clothes-shopping choices, style played the most significant role on overall apparel evaluation and selection, followed by price and size availability. Therefore, the representation of product image is essential for m-commerce. The country of origin was ranked the least important evaluative cue, and this finding is consistent with several prior studies (Rahman, 2011; Rahman et al., 2008). In other words, respondents were more concerned about the values of a product (style, price) rather than the country of production. Other than style and price, sizes availability also played an important role. Consumers might feel disappointed if they spent a considerable amount of time navigating the retailer’s website and couldn’t find their size available. Furthermore, when examining the past experience of online shopping, 15% of the respondents purchased clothing and accessories but only 10% chose online shopping as a mean to purchase footwear. It is reasonable to suggest that consumers are greatly concerned about the fit and comfort when it comes to footwear shopping.

	Frequency	Mean	S.D.
Style	401	1.49	0.794
Price	411	1.57	0.779
Sizes availability	409	1.67	0.938
Textiles/materials	412	1.84	0.923
Colour availability	411	2.07	0.994
Ease of care	407	2.83	1.239
Online review	410	3.38	1.366
Technical performance	413	3.40	1.310
Country of origin	408	3.82	1.208

Table 4: Salient apparel selection criteria
(1=most important to 5=least important)

Apparel Information Source

In terms of apparel information source, retail website was ranked the most important source, followed by friends and family members and store display. Clearly, blogs and TV ads were ranked relatively unimportant. The mean differences between males and females regarding apparel information source were examined by using the *t*-test. The results indicated that there were no significant differences between genders except in the matter of 'store display' ($t=-1.697$, $df=398$, $p=0.022$). Females were more inclined to use store display as one of the information sources than their counterparts. Since retail websites have been widely used by modern consumers, we believe that the shopping paradigm will shift and more and more consumers will adopt the mobile website as one of the important information sources in the near future.

	Frequency	Mean	S.D.
Retail websites	402	2.23	1.264
Friends and family members	403	2.30	1.134
Store display	403	2.51	1.175
Customer reviews	399	2.90	1.334
Magazines	405	2.94	1.227
Retail mobile websites	400	3.28	1.383
Blogs	398	3.46	1.244
TV ads	399	3.70	1.163

Table 5: Significance of apparel information source
(1=extremely important to 5=not important at all)

Implications and Conclusions

Apparel Retailer's App

In the current fashion market, retailers need to identify which particular features (e.g., store maps, barcode scanning for price check and product availability, etc.) of an app could have to make it more appealing for their target consumers. According to the results, 22% of respondents have downloaded an apparel retailer's app (Target, Macy's, H&M, Zara, Nordstrom, etc.), and 51% of tablet owners read digital magazines (Vogue, Elle, Ikea catalogues, etc.) It is interesting to point out that Macy's has developed a digital catalogue specifically designed for the iPad, and our findings revealed that 27% of respondents own an iPad tablet and 51% of those tablet users read digital magazines. With this implication, it is reasonable to suggest that developing look-books and digital catalogues for the iPad could be beneficial for apparel retailers. The use of other tablet platforms (e.g., Android, Nook Color, Amazon's Kindle Fire and Blackberry's Playbook) is fragmented, and they are not widely subscribed by the mobile users at the present time. In order to explore and investigate the potential of other platforms including the newly released Surface tablet from Microsoft, future research is needed; iPad currently maintains a hegemonic presence.

Social Networking and Mobile Communication

To enhance web development efforts, retailers also need to constantly monitor platform preferences among users, e.g. Apple's iPhone now has a hegemonic presence, but this could change; after all, Blackberry once had a prime position, and then lost it. It would be beneficial for retailers to engage their customers through social media efforts (e.g. Facebook pages, corporate Twitter accounts, monitoring customers' reviews) and to be aware of users' preferences, because new players enter social networks, and sometimes they can have a great influence in a very short period of time, two recent examples being Instagram and Pinterest. According to the current study, respondents visited Facebook most frequently as compared to other social media sites, and 38.2% of female respondents expressed that they would like to be informed through e-mail regarding any forms of promotion. In addition, the majority of the respondents (96.2%) indicated that they received various types of promotional e-mail at least once a month, and there were several reasons why respondents would like to sign up with or be informed by apparel retailers including discount/promotion, immediate discount, reward programs, event invitations, new fashion trends, and new products. With this perspective, it is imperative for fashion marketers and retailers to connect and communicate with their consumers through social networking and mobile devices.

Location-Based Services

Location-based services such as Wi-Fi can help to communicate promotions or other messages to in-store clients; posters or displays may be used to prompt shoppers to enable their devices. This may effectively overcome data-plan lacking and signal weaknesses (e.g. interference) on users' devices. With such perspective, in-store Internet connection could be an important way for apparel retailers to enhance mobile marketing. In the indoor setting, Wi-Fi is particularly useful for users because interference may occur due to concrete walls, metal furniture and/or crowded environment. Wi-Fi does not merely provide shoppers with convenience but also enables retailers to communicate with their potential customers (e.g., via e-coupons or promotions). In addition, if a retailer has developed an app, consumers can download it and engage themselves in different online activities. At the Target store, for instance, shoppers can use their app to scan the bar codes, create digital shopping lists, and to find out the product availability.

Despite all the challenges, consumers are generally embracing mobile devices and they have been increasingly interacting with fashion retailers through this channel. Many shoppers use their devices to gather information and to make comparisons for purchase-decision-making; they share content such as product photos on social networks; they sign-up to receive e-mails and communications from their favourite apparel retailers, and some use them to scan QR codes in-store, download retailers' apps and even engage in m-commerce.

Outlook of M-Commerce

It is reasonable to expect increasing numbers of consumers will adopt mobile technologies to engage with their favourite fashion retailers in future. We have previously experienced these 'shifts' from mail-ordering to online shopping, it is reasonable to expect the gradual adoption of mobile shopping. Retailers should find ways to overcome consumers' concerns for privacy/security, to make their apps and mobile websites convenient and easy to use, and even to educate shoppers in the use of apps, Wi-Fi enablement, QR code scanning, to pinpoint the location of digital look-books, etc.

Limitations and Future Research

The present study has several limitations or shortcomings as most research studies have. One of the shortcomings is that the current data was collected through a self-report survey, which means that the results could be subjective. Thus, handset-based measurement is recommended because this method can collect objective data on smartphone usage. Nevertheless, an online survey such as the present one should be treated as complementary and not substitutive (Karikoski & Soikkeli, 2011). Moreover, qualitative research methods can be employed to gain a deeper understanding of consumers' perceptions and preferences of m-commerce. A single study should not form the basis for generalizations. Therefore, more replication is needed to strengthen the data validity and reliability. In addition to this point, cross-cultural/longitudinal replication of this type of study would be interesting.

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