

Impact of Modernization on Indian Fashion Startups

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Abstract — The infusion of Western influence into Indian fashion has undergone a profound transformation, shaping the country's sartorial landscape in significant ways. This paper delves into the key facets of starting a new business revolved around Western influence on Indian fashion, examining historical antecedents, contemporary expressions, and the overarching impact of globalization. The dynamic interplay between traditional Indian aesthetics and Western design sensibilities has given rise to a fusion fashion movement reflective of a diverse and evolving cultural narrative. Historically, the adoption of Western styles in India can be traced back to globalization and colonial interactions, but it has intensified in recent decades. Thus, while thinking with the mind of an entrepreneur, all these things should be kept in mind and focused on. The contemporary manifestations of this influence are evident in the preferences of Indian consumers, especially the youth, who increasingly gravitate towards Westernized clothing styles and global fashion brands. The surge in the popularity of Western fashion is intricately connected to changing socio-economic dynamics, increased exposure through media, and the growing influence of global trends. Globalization, marked by increased connectivity and cultural exchange, has facilitated the seamless integration of Western elements into Indian fashion. This has resulted in a dynamic and cosmopolitan fashion scene, reflecting a harmonious blend of traditional and modern styles. This concludes that if a new startup is supposed to be proposed in the Indian market, it should have Western culture as well as the aesthetic of true Indian wear to get noticed by youth and a large population. The influence of the essay underscores the significance of Western influence as a catalyst for innovation, diversification, and the redefinition of fashion norms in India.

Keywords: Indian Fashion, Western Influence, Globalization, Fusion Fashion, Contemporary Expressions, Cultural Exchange, Sartorial Landscape, Socio-Economic, Startups, Entrepreneur

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Indian entrepreneurs have been highly inspired and motivated to create something of their own, and fashion is one of the most dominant domains. The fashion industry has seen a significant influence from Western styles and trends. Many Indian consumers, especially those in the richer classes, see fashion as a way to convey their status. As a result, there has been a growing demand for western-style clothing. This trend has led to a surge in the high-end fashion industry in India since the mid-1980s. With the increasing popularity of global brands among young women and the growing influence of social media, there has been a noticeable shift in fashion consumption patterns. It made the young and successful business people not only in India but abroad get involved with the Indian population to earn profits with their own preferences.

The challenge for fashion retail businesses in India lies in presenting product ranges that satisfy the desire for western styles while staying within the boundaries of culturally acceptable clothing. Despite this challenge, the demand for western styles is steadily increasing, and it is predicted that fashion retailing will continue to experience strong growth in India. This gives a golden opportunity to brands investing in the Indian Market through Foreign Direct Investments. It creates the way for Indian entrepreneurs to make money out of it giving the fashion on more pocket friendly budgets. The changing dynamics in the workforce, with an increased number of women joining, have also influenced purchase and consumption behaviours also encourages the Indian startups to rise and grow. With more educated Indian women in the workforce, the demand for fashion and designer wear has grown. This indicates a need for women's clothing that combines ethnic tastes with western styles, targeting the needs of the modern, educated Indian woman.

The increasing interaction between Indians and Westerners through social media and the proliferation of western products and individualistic philosophies have further fueled the "invasion" of Indian culture by Western brands and have also forced the Indian business of fashion to follow the same direction in order to set up new or hold on in the market, making India a lucrative market for global fashion marketers. Specialty stores have played a significant role in introducing and promoting international fashion trends, attracting a wide consumer base. Rising income levels and increased accessibility to global brands have influenced the evaluation and consumption of fashion brands among Indian consumers. Fashion clothing now holds connotations of status, enabling consumers to enhance their self-image, reflecting the changing dynamics of the Indian market.

The increasing number of educated women in the workforce has led to a surge in demand for fashion and designer while demographics and purchasing behaviors continue to evolve, it is crucial for fashion businesspersons to understand and adapt to the changing preferences of the Indian consumer base. The influx of smartphones and internet access has played a pivotal role in increasing interaction between Indians and Westerners through social media. This has facilitated the "invasion" of Indian culture by Western products and individualistic philosophies, further solidifying India's position as a lucrative market for global fashion marketers. With a large and youthful population of 1.2 billion, the potential for reaching and engaging with Indian consumers is substantial. Thus affecting the choice of population and business ideas for baby startups under fashion categories.

The surging interest in fashion and designer wear among Indian women, coupled with the evolving dynamics of the workforce and the increasing influence of Western products, signifies a transformative period for the fashion

industry in India. Adapting to these changes and integrating ethnic tastes with western styles presents an opportunity for fashion retailers to meet the needs of the discerning Indian consumer while navigating the delicate balance between tradition and modernity.

II. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The historical overview of Western influence in Indian fashion dates back to the era of rapid globalization, when Indian women began to venture into the professional realm and compete with their male counterparts. Western gowns, originally designed for royal courts in Western countries, have seamlessly transitioned to become a prominent feature in the wardrobes of Indian women. The contemporary Indian woman now perceives traditional attire such as the sari, salwar kameez, and kurta-tunic as essential components of her wardrobe, reflecting a harmonious blend of global and traditional influences. The evolving fashion landscape in India emphasizes the positive correlation between the diversity of fashion apparel and the changing role of women in society, as well as their educational and professional pursuits.

The emergence of power dressing in the 1970s and its subsequent development in the 1980s allowed women to establish their authority in professional and political environments traditionally dominated by men. Giving the opportunity to the very first Indian designers to enter the Indian fashion market. Followed by several new startups and innovations. The incorporation of sustainable and ethical practices by young, forward-thinking Indian designers further highlights the evolution of Indian fashion. Their creations, inspired by rich heritage and showcasing Indian aesthetics with a modern sensibility, set a new standard for the global fashion industry, emphasizing the country's old-charm fashion, which has been embraced worldwide. The transition and fusion of Western and Indian fashion have not only redefined the sartorial choices of Indian women but have also positioned India as a frontrunner in the global fashion arena, showcasing the country's rich cultural legacy in a modern context.

III. IMPACT OF WESTERN CULTURE ON TRADITIONAL INDIAN ATTIRE

The influx of smartphones and internet access has played a pivotal role in increasing interaction between Indians and Westerners through social media. This has facilitated the "invasion" of Indian culture by Western products and individualistic philosophies, further solidifying India's position as a lucrative market for global fashion marketers. With a large and youthful population of 1.2 billion, the potential for reaching and engaging with Indian consumers is substantial. As fashion continues to hold a significant place in Indian society, it is essential for fashion retailers to align their product ranges with evolving consumer preferences. While the demand for western styles is on the rise, it is crucial to strike a balance with what is culturally acceptable. This entails a thoughtful approach to blending ethnic tastes with western styles to cater to the needs of educated and modern Indian women. Additionally, the growing influence of global

brands among young Indian women highlights the need for fashion retailers to adapt to this shift in consumer behavior.

The surging interest in fashion and designer wear among Indian women, coupled with the evolving dynamics of the workforce and the increasing influence of Western products, signifies a transformative period for the fashion industry in India. Adapting to these changes and integrating ethnic tastes with western styles presents an opportunity for fashion retailers to meet the needs of the discerning Indian consumer while navigating the delicate balance between tradition and modernity. It is evident that traditional attire remains popular among women in India, but there is a notable uptick in the adoption of international fashion trends. This shift is a recent phenomenon, as a few decades earlier, Indian women lacked both the psychological and financial independence to purchase clothing of their choice. The influx of smartphones and internet access has played a pivotal role in increasing interaction between Indians and Westerners through social media. This has facilitated the "invasion" of Indian culture by Western products and individualistic philosophies, further solidifying India's position as a lucrative market for global fashion marketers. With a large and youthful population of 1.2 billion, the potential for reaching and engaging with Indian consumers is substantial.

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IV. WESTERN INFLUENCES ON CONTEMPORARY INDIAN DESIGNERS

As we delve into the impact of Western influence on Indian fashion, it becomes evident that the confluence of East and West has significantly shaped the contemporary fashion landscape in India. The adoption and adaptation of Western trends in Indian attire, as well as the transformation of traditional Indian fashion with Western aesthetics, reflect a dynamic cultural exchange. The globalization of fashion has opened avenues for the fusion of Western styles with traditional Indian wardrobes, catering to the changing needs of educated Indian women. The increased interest in fashion and designer wear among Indian women and a growing number of women in the workforce have reshaped purchase and consumption behaviors. The distinct intermingling of Western lifestyles and Indian traditional values has paved the way for international fashion brands to enter the Indian market. This, in turn, has heightened fashion and value consciousness among Indian consumers, challenging marketers to enhance value and remain competitive. The dominance of Western fashion in the global fashion industry has not only influenced the clothing people wear but has also left its mark on hairstyles, makeup, and accessories in non-Western societies.

The evolving fashion landscape in India not only reflects the infusion of Western styles but also signifies a shift in consumer behavior. With the increasing popularity of international fashion trends, there has been a noticeable transformation in apparel purchase decisions among Indian consumers. While traditional clothing remains popular, the influence of global fashion trends is gaining prominence, shaping the preferences of the Indian populace. The rise of digital media and technological advancements has further contributed to changing consumer behavior in the Indian fashion market. Television, the Internet, and clothing catalogs play a pivotal role in influencing apparel purchase decisions. As a result, it has become crucial for fashion apparel companies to align their advertising and promotional strategies with local customs and values to effectively resonate with the Indian consumer base. The growing influence of Western lifestyles in India has also raised the bar for fashion and value consciousness among Indian consumers. This has not only led to the entry of international fashion brands into the Indian market but has also propelled the need for a distinctive interplay between Western styles and Indian traditional values in women's clothing. Educated Indian women now seek a seamless fusion of ethnic tastes with Western elements, emphasizing the need for fashion to adapt to the evolving.

In response to the increasing influence of Western fashion, there has been a resurgence of local traditions in Indian fashion. This shift has stimulated a re-assertion of traditional beauty standards and a newfound confidence that celebrates the beauty of Asians and Africans. The growth of a high-end fashion industry in India since the mid-1980s has been a testament to the increasing popularity of non-Western fashion. This not only reflects the changing behavior of fashion consumers in developing economies like India but also highlights the significance of preserving and promoting indigenous designs and aesthetics.

Moreover, the increasing worldwide popularity of Bollywood and other non-Western cinemas has played a pivotal role in showcasing the richness of Indian culture and fashion on a global platform. The allure of "ethnic" cuisines and the growing appreciation for non-Western lifestyles mirror the impact of this cultural exchange. As we continue to explore the intertwined nature of Western and Indian fashion, it is imperative to recognize the evolving dynamics and the profound influence of this global trend on traditional and contemporary fashion trends in India.

V. IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON INDIAN FASHION INDUSTRY

The Indian fashion industry has undergone a profound transformation in the wake of globalization, with its impact being felt across various facets of the sector. One of the significant positive impacts has been the diversification of designs and styles. Globalization has allowed Indian designers to draw inspiration from a plethora of cultures, resulting in a fusion of traditional Indian aesthetics with contemporary global trends. This amalgamation has given rise to a vibrant and eclectic fashion scene that appeals to both domestic and international audiences. Globalization has facilitated the expansion of the Indian fashion market beyond

national borders. The emergence of e-commerce platforms and the integration of Indian designers into the global fashion ecosystem have enabled them to showcase their creations to a wider audience. This not only enhances the global visibility of Indian fashion but also contributes to increased revenue and economic growth within the industry. Technological advancements spurred by globalization have also played a pivotal role in reshaping the Indian fashion landscape. The industry has embraced cutting-edge design software and manufacturing techniques, leading to enhanced efficiency and improved product quality. This technological integration has positioned Indian fashion on par with global standards, fostering competitiveness and innovation.

However, the impact of globalization on the Indian fashion industry is not without its challenges. One of the concerns is the potential for cultural homogenization. In an effort to cater to global preferences, there is a risk that traditional Indian designs may be diluted or altered, raising questions about the preservation of the country's diverse cultural heritage within the global fashion narrative. The globalization of the fashion industry has brought to light ethical considerations, particularly in the manufacturing sector. Exploitative practices, such as the exploitation of cheap labor and unethical working conditions, have been reported. This raises ethical questions about the social responsibility of the industry and the need for sustainable and ethical practices in the production of fashion goods.

Another significant challenge lies in the impact on small-scale artisans and traditional craftsmen. While established designers and brands may benefit from globalization, the influx of mass-produced, globally influenced fashion could potentially overshadow the uniqueness of traditional handmade products. This poses a threat to the livelihoods of those reliant on traditional crafts, emphasizing the importance of striking a balance between global influences and the preservation of indigenous craftsmanship. The impact of globalization on the Indian fashion industry is a multifaceted phenomenon. While it has brought about positive changes such as design diversification, market expansion, and technological advancements, challenges like cultural homogenization, exploitative practices, and the impact on traditional artisans underscore the need for a thoughtful and sustainable approach. Balancing global influences with the preservation of cultural authenticity is crucial to ensuring the continued growth and resilience of the Indian fashion industry in an interconnected global landscape.

VI. WESTERN BRANDS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON INDIAN MARKET

The influence of Western brands in India has been increasingly shaping consumer behavior and preferences. With the desire for conspicuous consumption and the aspiration to align with Western lifestyles, Indian consumers have shown a preference for Western brands not only for their high quality but also for their association with a certain lifestyle and status. As India continues to embrace Western fashion and styles, it's important to note that the perception of luxury varies across different cultures. While there is a growing trend of acceptance of Western luxury brands, it's

essential to consider the influence of cultural factors on how luxury is perceived in the Indian context. The preferences and choices of Indian consumers are evolving in response to new cultural influences and changing desires, posing a significant challenge for brand managers to identify a brand essence that resonates with these evolving consumer preferences.

The increased interaction between Indians and Westerners through social media, as well as the accessibility to global products, has further contributed to the integration of Western products and individualistic philosophies into Indian culture. This "invasion" of Western products, coupled with the fashion and value consciousness among Indian consumers, has created a lucrative market for global fashion marketers in India. The evolving behavior of fashion consumers in developing economies like India emphasizes the need for marketers to understand the distinct intermingling of Western lifestyles and Indian traditional values. As international fashion brands continue to enter the Indian market, it's imperative for marketers to enhance the value they offer in order to remain competitive in this dynamic and evolving consumer landscape.

VII. FUSION FASHION: A BLEND OF INDIAN AND WESTERN STYLES

The fusion of Indian and Western fashion has created a unique and eclectic style that has gained popularity worldwide. This blending of traditional Indian textiles, patterns, and silhouettes with contemporary Western designs has resulted in a fashion trend that appeals to a diverse audience. The use of vibrant Indian fabrics such as silk, cotton, and chiffon in combination with Western-style cuts and tailoring has led to the creation of stunning outfits that seamlessly merge the best of both worlds. From elegant saree gowns and embellished tunics to Indo-Western dresses and fusion wear, the possibilities for innovative and stylish ensembles are endless. The fusion fashion movement has not only influenced the clothing industry but has also extended its reach to accessories, footwear, and even hair and makeup styles. This trend has brought about a celebration of cultural diversity and a breaking down of sartorial boundaries, allowing individuals to express their personal style in a way that is both contemporary and rooted in tradition. As the fusion of Indian and Western fashion continues to evolve, it presents an exciting opportunity for designers, stylists, and fashion enthusiasts to explore new creative avenues and push the boundaries of sartorial expression. This unique blend of cultures and aesthetics has undoubtedly made a lasting impact on the global fashion scene, and its influence shows no signs of slowing down. The fusion fashion trend, a blend of Indian and Western styles, has become increasingly popular as Indian women gain exposure to the globalized world and seek to embrace a style that reflects their cultural heritage while also resonating with modern sensibilities. The fusion fashion trend has become a symbol of empowerment and self-expression for Indian women, allowing them to embrace their roots while embracing global influences.

The versatility of fusion fashion allows women to experiment with different looks, mix and match garments, and create individualistic ensembles that are both timeless and trend-setting. Whether it's pairing a traditional Indian

saree with a contemporary blazer or donning a fusion-inspired tunic with jeans, the options are limitless, and the result is always a unique and personal statement. The fusion fashion movement has paved the way for the redefinition of power dressing in the Indian context. It goes beyond traditional notions of formal business attire and embraces a more inclusive and diverse approach to professional dressing. The incorporation of Indian textiles and silhouettes in power dressing signifies a shift towards a more inclusive and representative definition of authority and leadership, challenging the norms of a male-dominated professional environment. As the fusion fashion trend continues to captivate the imagination of Indian women, it becomes evident that the role of fashion apparel extends beyond mere aesthetics. It becomes a reflection of cultural identity, a medium for self-expression, and a catalyst for societal change. This evolution in fashion not only mirrors the changing role of women in society but also inspires future trend directions for everyday wear, blurring the lines between tradition and modernity.

VIII. INFLUENCE OF WESTERN MEDIA ON INDIAN FASHION CHOICES

The influence of Western media on Indian fashion is undeniable. As fashion education in India continues to evolve, it is crucial to take into account the impact of global trends and influences on the local industry. With premier institutes striving to bridge the gap between academia and industry, it is essential to understand the role of media in shaping business intelligence, industrial trends, and innovations within the Indian fashion landscape. As the industry continues to grow and adapt to global influences, it is imperative for fashion education in India to embrace the dialogue between academia and industry. By acknowledging the role of media in shaping industry knowledge and trends, educators and students can stay ahead of the curve and prepare for the dynamic landscape of the fashion sector. In addition to the transformation of fashion education, the curriculum at NIFT emphasizes the fusion of global fashion aesthetics with traditional Indian designs. The focus on design sensitization prepares students to cater to both the export market and the diverse segments of the Indian fashion industry, including couture and pret-a-porter. This approach not only caters to industry requirements but also cultivates a multidisciplinary perspective, fostering self-learning and independent thinking among the students.

The importance of understanding fashion as a cultural phenomenon rather than just a seasonal trend is emphasized for fashion students. The industry demands competencies that go beyond the surface level of fashion, indicating the need for a deeper understanding of cultural and symbolic values. As the Indian fashion industry continues to evolve, it is crucial for fashion education to keep pace with the changing dynamics. By integrating global influences, understanding cultural values, and bridging the gap between academia and industry, NIFT and other premier institutes can contribute to the development of a robust and globally competitive fashion landscape in India.

IX. CONCLUSION:

Indian fashion has been significantly influenced by Western styles and trends since the mid-1980s, with a surge in high-end fashion industry. The increasing popularity of global brands among young women and social media has led to a shift in fashion consumption patterns. The growing number of educated Indian women in the workforce has led to a need for women's clothing that combines ethnic tastes with western styles, targeting the needs of modern, educated Indian women. The history of Western influence in Indian fashion dates back to the era of rapid globalization, when Indian women began to compete with their male counterparts in the professional realm. Traditional attire such as the sari, salwar kameez, and kurta-tunic have become essential components of Indian women's wardrobes, reflecting a harmonious blend of global and traditional influences. The influx of smartphones and internet access has further facilitated the "invasion" of Indian culture by Western products and individualistic philosophies. The Indian fashion industry has undergone a profound transformation in the wake of globalization, with positive impacts such as diversification of designs and styles, market expansion, and technological advancements. However, challenges like cultural homogenization, exploitative practices, and the impact on small-scale artisans and traditional craftsmen underscore the need for a thoughtful and sustainable approach. Balancing global influences with the preservation of cultural authenticity is crucial for the continued growth and resilience of the Indian fashion industry in an interconnected global landscape.

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