

Role of Social Media in the Evolution of Fashion Within Traditional Societies

Supriya Yadav^{a1*}, Dr. Vanya Chaturvedi^{b2}

^a NIFT & PhD Research Scholar, SAGE, Bhopal 462026, India.

^b SoPA & JMC, Sanjeev Agrawal Global Educational (SAGE) University, Bhopal 462022, India.

¹ supriya.yadav@nift.ac.in, ² drvanya.sageuniversity@gmail.com

*Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT

This analytical research examines the transformative interplay between traditional societies and modern fashion, focusing on India. Fashion, deeply rooted in cultural heritage, has evolved into a medium of personal expression, blending traditional and contemporary elements. The study explores the impact of globalisation, industrialisation, and social media on consumer behaviour and fashion trends. A secondary research methodology was adopted, utilising data from research papers, news articles, fashion magazines, and statistical reports.

The findings highlight the pivotal role of social media in democratising fashion, reshaping consumer behaviour, and promoting cultural fusion. Influencers, campaigns like saree styling, and handloom revival have emphasised preserving heritage while embracing innovation. Key recommendations include adopting digital technologies such as Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, and Artificial Intelligence to enhance consumer engagement, promoting ethical and sustainable practices with transparent supply chains, and collaborating with local artisans to safeguard cultural heritage.

The research underscores the necessity of balancing modernisation with respect for cultural values to ensure inclusivity and sustainability in the fashion industry. It concludes that fashion bridges heritage and modernity, driving social change by fostering individuality and social inclusivity. By leveraging technology and preserving cultural identity, the fashion industry can continue to thrive, shaping a responsible and innovative future.

Keywords: Social Media, Traditional Society, Fashion, Consumer Behaviour, India.

1. Introduction

1.1 Fashion

1.1.1 Traditional Fashion

Historically, fashion has been viewed as an extension of cultural identity and heritage. Clothing styles, colors, and patterns often carry deep symbolic meanings and are passed down through generations. These sartorial choices are not merely about aesthetics but are woven into the social fabric, representing values, social status, and communal belonging.

In India, traditional fashion is similarly rich with cultural and symbolic meanings. The sari, for example, is not just a garment but a representation of Indian heritage. Different regions have their styles of sarees, such as the Kanjivaram from Tamil Nadu, known for its rich silk and intricate designs, and

the Banarasi sari from Varanasi, famous for its gold and silver brocade. Each style carries specific cultural significance and is often associated with regional traditions and ceremonies.

Another example is the Indian lehenga choli, typically worn during festivals and weddings. The lehenga, a long skirt, is often heavily embroidered and paired with a choli, a cropped blouse, and a dupatta, a long scarf. The colors, designs, and embroidery patterns symbolise different aspects of life, such as prosperity, fertility, and marital bliss.

These examples highlight the ever-evolving fashion world. In these societies, clothing is tied to ceremonies and rites of passage, reflecting age, gender, social status, and occasion. The need to preserve these customs results in slow or minimal changes to traditional fashion, maintaining a link to the past.

1.1.2 Fashion Evolution Through the Ages

The Industrial Revolution marked a significant turning point in the evolution of fashion. Mass production and global trade enabled the widespread availability of fashionable clothing, making it more accessible to the general population. This democratisation of fashion led to the rise of consumer culture, where individuals could express their style and identity through fashion choices. The advent of television and print media further amplified the influence of fashion, as celebrities and fashion icons became the primary sources of inspiration for the masses.

1.2 Consumer Behaviour

1.2.1 Model of Consumer Behaviour

One of the widely accepted models of consumer behaviour is the Engel-Kollat-Blackwell (EKB) Model, which explains the decision-making process in five key stages:

Problem Recognition: The consumer identifies a need or desire influenced by social media, peer recommendations, or trends.

Information Search: Consumers gather product information through online sources, including fashion blogs, influencer posts, and customer reviews.

Evaluation of Alternatives: Different brands and styles are compared based on price, quality, brand reputation, and user reviews.

Purchase Decision: The final decision is influenced by discounts, influencer endorsements, and personalised recommendations.

Post-Purchase Behaviour: Consumers share reviews, return products if unsatisfied, or recommend purchases on social media, influencing others.

1.2.2 Contemporary Consumer

Today, consumers are more informed, connected, and empowered than ever, thanks to digital technology and the internet. They have easy access to varied products, services, and information, transforming their behaviours and expectations. Modern consumers prioritise quality, value,

personalised experiences, and ethical practices. Social media and online platforms shape consumer perceptions and preferences, enabling research, price comparison, reviews, and informed decision-making. Increasingly, consumers prefer brands that reflect their values, such as sustainability, social responsibility, or inclusivity. This shift has driven businesses to adopt customer-centric strategies focused on engagement, transparency, and responsiveness to meet the evolving demands of empowered consumers.

1.2.3 Consumer Dynamics

Digital Natives: Proficient in digital technologies for communication, shopping, entertainment, and information sharing.

Sustainability Advocates: Prioritize eco-friendly products and environmentally sustainable brands.

Ethical Shoppers: Demand fair-trade practices, ethical sourcing, and good labor conditions.

Conscious Consumers: Consider social, environmental, and ethical factors in their purchases.

Tech-Savvy Shoppers: Use technology for comparison shopping, online reviews, and product information.

Experience Seekers: Prefer experiences over material possessions, driving experiential retail trends.

Personalised Buyers: Value personalised recommendations, customised products, and tailored marketing.

Health and Wellness Consumers: Favor health-conscious products like organic foods and natural skincare.

Convenience-driven Shoppers: Seek convenience through fast delivery, easy returns, and seamless online transactions.

Influencer-Driven Buyers: Influenced by social media influencers, celebrities, or online personalities in their purchases.

1.2.4 Evolving Consumer Behaviour

Consumer behaviour is evolving like never before. With the advent of e-commerce platforms and social media, consumers now enjoy unprecedented convenience and access to varied products, services, and information. This shift has empowered consumers to make more informed decisions, compare prices effortlessly, seek personalised experiences, and dwell on customisation. Peer and influencer reviews and recommendations significantly influence purchasing decisions. Brands must now navigate this digital terrain by fostering trust, delivering seamless shopping experiences, and adapting quickly to changing consumer preferences and expectations.

1.3 Social Media

1.3.1 Historical Context of Social Media

The rise of social media in the early 2000s revolutionised online interactions, initially focusing on social networking before becoming crucial for marketing and branding. Particularly in the fashion industry, social media's visual appeal enabled brands to showcase products globally, catalysing the growth of online retail. Major brands like Myntra, Ajio, and Amazon capitalised on this digital shift.

Online shopping offers significant advantages, including the convenience of shopping anytime and anywhere, receiving personalised recommendations, reading reviews, and comparing prices. For businesses, online platforms expand their reach, reduce operational costs, and enable targeted marketing. Advanced technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) have enhanced the shopping experience, tailoring it to individual consumer preferences and behaviours.

1.3.2 The Rise of Social Media

Social media has revolutionised information dissemination, especially in fashion. Platforms like Instagram and Facebook showcase global styles and trends and influence traditional societies. Algorithm-driven content exposes users to diverse fashion ideas, altering perceptions and preferences. Users engage directly with brands, designers, and influencers, creating a sense of community and participation. Hashtags, comments, and likes amplify trends, encouraging a fusion of traditional and contemporary styles for unique, hybrid looks.



Fig.1. Saree Jacket by
Bhumika Sharma



Fig. 2. Fusion Fashion
by Shruti Sancheti



Fig. 3. Preity Zinta
at Cannes 2024

Social media has democratised fashion, accelerated its pace, and broadened its reach. Understanding the dynamics of each platform and their impact on consumer behaviour is essential for fashion brands looking to navigate and thrive in this digital era.

1.3.3 Social Media in Fashion

Social media has revolutionised the fashion industry, fundamentally altering how trends emerge, spread, and evolve globally. Historically, fashion trends were largely influenced by elite designers, fashion houses, and traditional media channels like magazines and runway shows. However, the advent of social media platforms has democratised this process, giving rise to a new era where anyone with an internet connection can shape fashion discourse.



Fig. 4. Vogue India

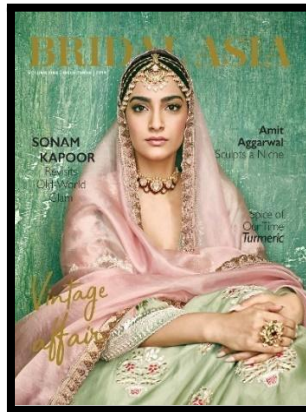


Fig. 5. Bridal Asia



Fig. 6. Harper's Bazaar

1.3.4 Social Media's Impact on the Indian Fashion Industry

It has profoundly impacted the traditional fashion industry's business models, transforming the fashion brands' market, engaging with consumers, and operating their businesses. Here are the key ways social media has influenced the traditional fashion industry:

Democratisation of Fashion: Platforms like Instagram and YouTube have democratised fashion by allowing anyone with creativity and fashion sense to showcase outfits and ideas. This inclusivity promotes diverse styles and body types, challenging traditional fashion norms and gatekeepers.

Influence of Fashion Influencers: Social media has empowered a new generation of influencers who shape trends and consumer preferences. They share personal styles and product recommendations, significantly impacting their followers' purchasing choices. Brands collaborate with influencers to market products effectively, reshaping traditional advertising methods.

Real-Time Fashion Show Coverage: Social media has revolutionised fashion show coverage, making it accessible to a global audience. Once exclusive, fashion shows now reach viewers in real-time through platforms like Snapchat and Instagram Stories, offering behind-the-scenes access and up-close looks at collections. Apps and online portals of leading fashion brands provide round-the-clock updates on shows, trends, forecasts, and more, all easily accessible with a click.

Direct Consumer Interaction: Social media enables fashion brands to engage directly and in real-time with their audience, responding to comments and addressing concerns. This interaction

fosters community and builds brand loyalty, while consumer feedback offers valuable insights for product and service improvements.



Fig. 7. Snapchat Goes Live During Fashion Week

Shoppable Content and Influencer Marketing: Social media platforms now integrate shopping features, allowing users to purchase products directly from posts or ads. Brands can tag products, providing easy access to information and facilitating immediate purchases. Influencers also leverage these features to promote products, earning commissions through their endorsements.

New Marketing Frontiers: Social media has opened new marketing opportunities for fashion brands, with platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok offering targeted advertising options. This targeted approach allows brands to reach specific demographics and interests, essential for staying competitive in the digital age. For instance, Nykaa Cosmetics employs effective online targeting, supported by a prominent brand ambassador and an omnichannel marketing strategy that has driven remarkable success.

Impact on Traditional Marketing: Social media has shifted marketing strategies by becoming essential for fashion brands to engage audiences, build awareness, and drive sales. This has led to the reassignment of marketing budgets.

Global Reach and Accessibility: Fashion enthusiasts now access global brands instantly, transcending borders for a more diverse fashion landscape. Platforms like Facebook and Instagram integrate shopping features, boosting e-commerce growth for brands like Myntra, Ajio, Flipkart, and Amazon.

E-commerce and Online Shopping: Social media's shopping features on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have accelerated online shopping, making it easier for users to buy directly from posts or ads. This has become crucial for brands to drive sales and adapt to evolving consumer preferences.

Sustainability and Ethical Fashion: Social media has raised awareness about sustainable and ethical fashion practices. Discussions on garment lifecycle, ethical production, and quality over quantity are growing, reflecting a shift towards responsible fashion consumption.

1.3.5 Social Media and Fashion Trends

Platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Pinterest have transformed the fashion industry by democratising trends and providing a global stage for fashion enthusiasts, influencers, and brands. These platforms enable real-time engagement and allow users to tailor and share fashion content. User-generated content and popular hashtags drive trends and create fashion-focused communities, influencing consumer preferences and brand strategies.

Platform Influence: Social media platforms have become influential hubs for fashion trends. Instagram's visual interface showcases styles globally, TikTok's short videos popularise trends quickly, and Pinterest helps users discover and save fashion inspirations, affecting purchasing decisions.

User-Generated Content and Hashtags: User-generated content plays a pivotal role in shaping fashion trends. Influencers and users share outfits, tips, and hauls, quickly gaining traction. Hashtags like #OOTD and #FashionInspiration amplify reach and foster community engagement.

Influence on the Fashion Industry: Social media democratises fashion, giving diverse creators a voice. Influencers collaborate with brands, bridging runway trends and consumer preferences. Social media enables direct consumer feedback and real-time engagement, shaping brand strategies and product development.

1.3.6 Navigating the Digital Runway

The digital runway involves mastering social media and digital platforms to enhance brand visibility, engage a global audience, and drive sales. Fashion brands must craft compelling visual stories suited to each platform's strengths, such as visuals, short-form videos, or inspirational boards. Effective influencer partnerships and impactful social media campaigns are crucial. By embracing digital innovation and adapting to evolving trends, brands can successfully establish their presence on the digital runway.

Strategies for fashion brands to effectively use social media platforms: Fashion brands can optimise social media by engaging with targeted audiences, partnering with influencers, and ensuring a consistent brand voice across all platforms.

Visual storytelling and content strategies for different platforms: To tailor visual content to suit each platform's unique strengths is crucial. Fashion brands can employ behind-the-scenes footage, user-generated content, and interactive polls to enhance engagement.

Successful social media campaign: Sabyasachi, a prominent Indian luxury fashion brand, focused on showcasing its numerous collections through collaborations with other brands, celebrities, and influencers. This strategic approach not only solidified Sabyasachi's reputation as a premier brand for wedding attire but also effectively engaged its target audience, demonstrating the power of influencer partnerships and compelling visual content in digital marketing strategies for fashion brands. The

campaign illustrates how strategic use of social media can amplify brand presence and resonate with diverse audiences globally.



Fig. 8. The Neo-Bohemian Collection



Fig. 9. Sabyasachi & Estée Lauder Collaboration



Fig. 10. Sabyasachi's Devi Collection

1.3.7 Social Media Shaping Cultural and Societal Attitudes Towards Fashion

Social media acts as a powerful tool in shaping cultural and societal attitudes towards fashion in traditional societies:

Cultural Exchange: Platforms like Instagram and Pinterest enable a global exchange of cultural fashion ideas. This exchange fosters a greater appreciation for diverse cultural aesthetics and encourages the blending of different fashion traditions.

Breaking Stereotypes: Influencers and fashion enthusiasts use social media to challenge and break traditional stereotypes associated with certain types of clothing. This leads to a more inclusive and diverse representation of fashion within conventional societies.

Empowerment and Individuality: Social media empowers individuals to express their personal style and individuality. This shift from collective to individual identity in fashion is particularly significant in traditional societies, where clothing has historically been a marker of communal identity.

1.4 Traditional Society

1.4.1 Traditional Society in India

A traditional society maintains long-established customs, beliefs, and practices, emphasising communal values, social cohesion, and cultural heritage. These societies value stability and continuity, with strong community and family bonds, prevalent joint families, and respect for elders. Religious practices and festivals like Diwali, Holi, and Eid play significant roles. Social structures, frequently shaped by the caste system, impact marriage, occupation, and social interactions. Despite modernisation, many rural areas in India maintain traditional lifestyles, with agriculture as the primary

occupation and local crafts integral to the economy. This blend of ancient traditions and modern influences creates a unique social fabric.

1.4.2 Cultural Shifts in Fashion within Traditional Societies

Fashion is a dynamic force for awareness and transformation in our evolving society. It bridges the gap between heritage and modernity, showcasing how traditional communities adapt to and embrace contemporary influences. Traditional societies showcase their distinct identities while engaging with emerging global trends through fashion. Mentioned are a few ways fashion is driving social change:

Embracing Individuality (Fashion as Personal Expression): In today's fashion landscape, individuality reigns supreme, with fashion serving as a canvas for showcasing unique identities and diverse perspectives. Social media and digital platforms provide unprecedented access to global trends, allowing individuals to blend cultural heritage with personal quirks. Customisation enables people to tailor outfits and accessories to reflect their personality and preferences, creating a distinct identity. Fashion has become a tool for self-discovery and empowerment, with each outfit serving as a statement of individuality, creativity, and personal values. By mixing vintage finds with contemporary pieces, experimenting with bold colors and patterns, or indulging in bespoke creations, fashion enthusiasts embrace diversity and inclusivity, challenging norms and celebrating individuality.



Fig. 11. Breaking Taboos - Ranveer Singh

Gender Equality: The feminist movement has transformed fashion, empowering women to challenge oppressive norms and embrace diverse expressions of identity through clothing. This shift has reshaped design, marketing, and global perceptions, promoting inclusivity and breaking gender stereotypes. Women's fashion now reflects individuality and empowerment, fostering more equitable and diverse representation in the industry.



Fig. 12. Unisex Fashion as Gender Equality

Sustainable and Ethical Fashion Movements: Sustainability has spurred a rise in eco-friendly fashion. Brands are adopting practices emphasising environmental stewardship, fair labor, and ethical sourcing to minimise the industry's ecological footprint and promote social responsibility. By using sustainable materials, reducing waste, and ensuring supply chain transparency, they set new standards for responsible consumption. This shift supports preserving natural resources and communities involved in fashion production, which assures a sustainable future for the industry and the planet.

The Influence of the LGBTQIA+ Community: Fashion has profoundly influenced contemporary trends, gaining mainstream recognition, especially in advocating genderless fashion. Designers and brands now emphasise diversity and inclusion in their presentations, collections, and marketing, fostering broader cultural acceptance of non-binary and gender-fluid styles. This shift challenges traditional dress norms and amplifies queer voices, evolving the fashion industry into a more inclusive space that celebrates individuality and affirms everyone's right to authentic self-expression through clothing and style.



Fig. 13 & 14. New York's Pride Week 2023 Collection by Designer Mayyur Girotra

“Self-Love” Movement: The fashion industry is increasingly championing body positivity and inclusivity, expanding size ranges and embracing diverse forms of beauty. This shift celebrates individuality, challenges conventional norms, and fosters an inclusive environment where all shapes and sizes feel valued. It reflects a broader cultural movement towards acceptance and redefines what it means to be fashionable today.



Fig. 15 &16 .Left Plus Size Model & Influencer Sakshi Breaking All Odds Right: Aysha Siddique, a Sabyasachi Bride

Diversity and Racial Inclusion: Fashion is evolving to include diverse skin tones and representations, recognising that beauty goes beyond traditional standards. This change reflects a commitment to diversity across global cultures and ethnicities. Brands and designers now feature models and influencers from diverse racial backgrounds, celebrating their unique features and perspectives. This shift in fashion promotes equity and representation, empowering individuals to express their heritage and cultural identity through style.



Fig. 17. Mannequins Marking a Social Change

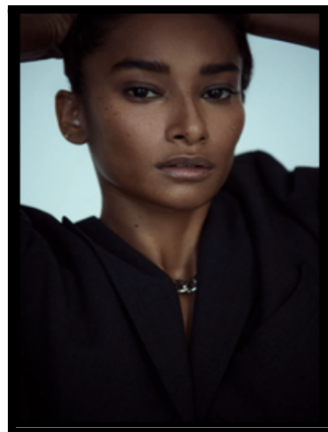


Fig. 18. Nidhi Sunil Global Brand Ambassador for L'Oréal Paris (2021)



Fig. 19. London's Inclusive & Ethical Fashion Models

Fashion mirrors the spirit of the times, encapsulating the zeitgeist and weaving a narrative of progress, inclusivity, and change through its fabric. Beyond mere attire, it embodies society's values, beliefs, and aspirations. Throughout history, fashion has both reflected and driven transformative moments.

These shifts transcend clothing, reshaping perspectives, and challenging norms. Fashion remains a dynamic canvas for our collective growth. As society advances, our clothing symbolises our journey toward a more just and inclusive tomorrow.

1.4.3 The Impact of Social Media on Traditional Societies

Social media has profoundly transformed traditional societies' perceptions and interactions with fashion. The platforms provide unprecedented access to global fashion trends, allowing individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds to engage with, adapt, and sometimes challenge their traditional fashion norms.

1.4.4 Traditional Societies' Perception of Fashion Through Social Media

Traditional societies which historically adhered to time-honored sartorial customs are now exposed to globalised fashion influences through social media. This exposure has led to a shift in how these societies view fashion:

Increased Awareness: Social media platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, and Facebook offer a constant stream of fashion inspiration on a global scale. This access broadens the horizons of individuals in traditional societies, encouraging them to explore and adopt new styles.

Fusion of Styles: Traditional blends with modern fashion elements, and a unique fusion style emerges. This hybridisation can be seen through a fusion of contemporary designs with traditional garments, creating innovative fashion statements that respect cultural heritage while embracing modern aesthetics. For example, the Kutch and Rajasthan region mirror-embroidered attire by Moschino.



Fig. 20. Kutch and Rajasthani Mirror Work Attire by Moschino

Consumer Behaviour: The ease of online shopping facilitated by social media advertisements and influencer endorsements has transformed consumer behaviour. Traditional societies are increasingly buying fashion items online, driven by trends observed on social media.

1.4.5 The Future of Fashion in Traditional Societies

Efforts to promote ethical and sustainable fashion movements on social media are gaining momentum. Initiatives supporting slow fashion, fair trade, and local artisans are countering the negative impacts of fast fashion. These movements encourage consumers to value the stories and craftsmanship behind their clothing, fostering a more meaningful and sustainable approach to fashion consumption.

Looking ahead, technology, including AI, VR, and AR, is set to play a significant role in the future of fashion. These technologies offer immersive experiences such as virtual fashion shows and interactive storytelling about the cultural significance of garments. They also enable consumers to try traditional attire innovatively, enhancing engagement and appreciation for cultural fashion heritage.

1.4.6 The Future Impact of Social Media on Fashion and Traditional Societies

Social media's role in the fashion industry is poised to become even more significant. Emerging technologies are transforming the online shopping experience, allowing consumers to try on clothes virtually before purchasing. Furthermore, AI and machine learning algorithms will enhance personalised shopping experiences by anticipating consumer preferences and suggesting products accordingly.

For traditional societies, the impact of social media will continue to be profound. As these societies gain greater access to global fashion trends, the bond between traditional and contemporary styles will become more pronounced. This integration will lead to innovative fashion expressions that respect cultural heritage while embracing modern influences. However, it is crucial to navigate this transition carefully to avoid cultural appropriation and ensure that traditional crafts and artisans are respected and fairly compensated.

1.5 Influencers

1.5.1 An Influencer

An individual who has the power to affect the purchasing decisions and behaviours of others because of their authority, knowledge, position, or relationship with their audience. They typically use social media platforms to share content and engage with followers.

1.5.2 A fashion influencer

This type of influencer focuses on fashion-related content. They share their style, outfit ideas, fashion tips, and trends, often collaborating with brands to promote clothing, accessories, and beauty products. Fashion influencers are key players in shaping and popularising fashion trends among their followers.

1.5.3 Social Media Influencers and Their Impact on Fashion Trends

Due to their expertise, charisma, or niche content, social media influencers have amassed large followers on platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Pinterest. Celebrities and influencers often cultivate direct and personal relationships with their audiences, fostering a sense of belonging and authenticity. This closeness allows influencers to sway fashion trends by showcasing their style, collaborating with brands, and engaging in interactive content that resonates with their followers.



Fig. 21. Virat Kohli's New Hair Style



Fig. 22. Alia Bhatt in Off-White Bridalwear



Fig. 23. Deepika Padukone in Oversized Clothes

The emergence of influencers has recently added a new dimension to this landscape. Deinfluencers challenge the traditional influencer model by promoting more thoughtful and intentional consumer behaviour. They encourage followers to critically assess their fashion choices, advocating for sustainability, minimalism, and ethical consumption. This movement aims to counteract the often-rampant consumerism driven by influencers, fostering a more balanced and mindful approach to fashion trends.

1.5.4 The Power of Influencers

Social media influencers wield considerable influence in driving fashion trends and shaping consumer behaviour. Through authentic and relatable interactions with their followers, influencers cultivate strong bonds that make their recommendations highly impactful. They swiftly popularise brands and trends, often leading to rapid product sell-outs, underscoring their significant role in the industry. Additionally, influencers promote diversity in fashion representation, challenging conventional beauty norms and advocating inclusivity.

Furthermore, influencers play pivotal roles in niche markets, such as sustainable fashion or vintage styles, fostering dedicated communities and revolutionising marketing strategies within the fashion industry.

1.5.5 Influencers and the Democratisation of Fashion

Social media has ushered in the rise of fashion influencers, ordinary individuals with a flair for style and sizable followings, who now play pivotal roles in shaping fashion trends. These influencers bridge global fashion trends with local traditional styles, creating a unique blend that resonates widely.

In traditional societies, fashion often evolved under the guidance of local artisans and cultural influencers. The emergence of fashion influencers introduces a new dynamic. They challenge conventional norms by showcasing alternative, sometimes avant-garde styles, and their ability to engage large audiences empowers them to drive significant changes in fashion behaviours, encouraging followers to explore and adopt new trends.

Moreover, influencers democratise fashion by making it accessible to a broader audience. Social media influencers differ from traditional fashion icons, who originate from diverse backgrounds. This inclusivity broadens the representation of styles and body types, challenging fashion hierarchies and promoting diversity in the industry.

1.5.6 How Influencers Set Trends and Create Demand for Specific Fashion Items

Influencers set trends by curating and presenting fashion in innovative ways that capture the imagination of their followers. Influencers demonstrate how to wear and style specific clothing items or accessories through carefully crafted content such as OOTD posts, fashion hauls, and style guides. Their endorsements of brands and products can create immediate demand, leading to viral sensations and sold-out items within hours.

1.5.7 Successful Fashion Influencer Marketing Campaigns

Numerous influencer marketing campaigns have proven effective in reaching target audiences authentically. Collaborations between fashion brands and influencers often result in limited-edition collections that leverage the influencer's credibility, reach, and enhance sales & brand visibility. For example, Komal Pandey has partnered with brands like Google, Whisper, Vaseline, and Myntra, using her influence to promote their products through creative content. Her collaborations highlight the impact of digital influencers on shaping trends and consumer behaviour in India.

Similarly, brands like Nike and Adidas regularly collaborate with athletes, celebrities, and fitness influencers to promote their activewear lines, capitalising on influencers' lifestyle expertise and aspirational choices.



Fig. 24. Simran Randhawa & Nike Automax



Fig. 25. Sharvari & Adidas India

1.5.8 Social Media's Influence on Traditional Societies' Fashion Choices in India

Boho Chic Movement: Fashion influencers have popularised fusion fashion by mixing traditional Indian attire with bohemian elements. This trend combines classic Indian clothing, like kurtas and sarees, with boho accessories, creating a unique and trendy look. Influencers and celebrities often showcase these combinations, inspiring followers to experiment with their style.



Fig. 26. Boho Semi-casual Look



Fig. 27. Aditi Rao Hydari's Boho Look

Handloom Revival: Social media campaigns have revived interest in traditional Indian handlooms by promoting sustainable and ethical fashion. Influencers and brands highlight handloom fabrics' craftsmanship and cultural significance, increasing demand. Brands like Roots Handloom, Okhai, and The Indian Ethnic Co. collaborate with local artisans to showcase their work, bringing traditional weaving techniques to a broader audience.

Saree Styling Trends: Social media influencers like Dolly Jain have transformed the perception of traditional Indian sarees. Known for her innovative draping techniques, she uses Instagram and YouTube to teach contemporary and versatile saree styling. Her influence has made sarees more appealing to younger generations, encouraging their incorporation into casual and festive wardrobes. Dolly Jain's clients include celebrities like the Ambanis, Priyanka Chopra, Deepika Padukone, Sridevi, and Gigi Hadid, giving her international acclaim.

Indie Fashion Brands: Brands like Grassroot by Anita Dongre, Label Raasleela, Rangсутra, Ukti, Fabindia, Bunaai, and Anokhi use social media to promote traditional Indian textiles and crafts. By collaborating with fashion influencers and showcasing their products online, they have brought traditional Indian fashion to a global audience. Social media campaigns highlight the cultural heritage and sustainable practices behind their products, appealing to modern, conscious consumers. These brands empower women by teaching them skills and leveraging their expertise in product manufacturing, focusing on using natural dyes and materials for sustainability.

These examples illustrate how social media has influenced traditional societies' fashion choices in India, blending traditional elements with contemporary styles and bringing age-old crafts into the modern fashion landscape.

1.5.9 The Impact on Local Artisans and Traditional Crafts

Social media promotes global fashion trends and provides visibility for local artisans and traditional crafts. Artisans creating traditional garments and accessories now reach a wider audience, potentially increasing their market and preserving their crafts. For example, Indian artisans producing handwoven Pashmina shawls from Kashmir or intricate Chikankari embroidery from Lucknow can showcase their work on social media, attracting a global audience that appreciates their craftsmanship. This visibility brings economic benefits and helps preserve these traditional crafts in a rapidly evolving fashion landscape.

Integrating global trends with traditional crafts can dilute cultural meanings. Traditional garments adapted to fit modern aesthetics risk losing their symbolic significance. Timeless Indian textiles like Phulkari from Punjab or Bandhani from Gujarat may lose their cultural significance when mass-produced and marketed globally. To counter this, artisans and designers use social media to educate audiences about the heritage and meanings behind their creations, preserving traditional crafts while adapting to contemporary tastes. Designers, influencers, and celebrities are important in maintaining the integrity and demand for these culturally significant legacies, ensuring their continuation for future generations.

2. Methodology

This study uses an analytical research approach, combining secondary and primary data to explore the impact of social media, globalisation, and technology on the fashion industry in traditional societies, focusing on India. Secondary data was collected from credible sources, including academic papers, industry reports, and fashion magazines.

Primary research was conducted through personal observations gained over years of experience in the fashion education sector, insights into how social media influences preferences, design innovations, and the fusion of traditional and modern fashion.

The research employed a systematic review of the literature and market trends, quantitative and qualitative analysis of consumer behaviour, technological advancements, and integration of traditional elements into contemporary designs.

3. Results

The study identified several key insights and formulated recommendations for fashion brands navigating the intersection of tradition, modernity, and digital transformation:

Digital Transformation: Adopting advanced digital technologies such as AR, VR, and AI is crucial for fashion brands to elevate customer engagement and deliver personalised shopping experiences. These innovations enhance consumer satisfaction while giving brands a competitive advantage in the rapidly evolving digital marketplace.

Ethical and Sustainable Practices: The growing consumer demand for sustainability emphasises the importance of transparency and ethical practices in the fashion industry. Fashion brands should prioritise sustainable sourcing, fair labor practices, and eco-friendly production methods. Social media platforms can effectively communicate these initiatives, engaging an increasingly conscious consumer base.

Cultural Heritage Preservation: Brands and influencers should maintain cultural authenticity while incorporating traditional elements into contemporary designs. Respecting the cultural significance of these elements is critical. Collaborating with local artisans and recognising their contributions helps preserve traditional craftsmanship and ensures cultural heritage is respected and celebrated in modern fashion.

Influencer Marketing: Influencers continue to shape fashion trends and consumer behaviour. Brands should partner with influencers whose values align with their brand ethos, ensuring authentic promotion. Virtual influencers offer innovative ways to engage audiences, but human influencers should be mindful of promoting sustainable and culturally respectful fashion.

Community Engagement: Understanding and engaging with local communities is vital for brands expanding into traditional markets. By respecting cultural nuances and traditions, fashion brands can create designs that resonate with the local audience, thus preserving heritage while fostering innovation.

4. Conclusion

This study highlights the importance of digital innovation, sustainability, respect for cultural heritage, and influencer marketing in shaping the future of fashion. The findings emphasise that fashion brands must leverage digital technologies like AR, VR, and AI to enhance customer engagement and stay

competitive. Consumers demand ethical transparency to justify a growing shift toward sustainable fashion practices. The study underscores that traditional societies, such as those in India, maintain social cohesion through cultural heritage, which fashion can bridge with modernity.

The research also reveals fashion's role in social change by promoting individuality, gender equality, and sustainability. Social media plays a key role in amplifying these messages, while fashion influencers help democratise style and challenge norms. This aligns with existing literature on fashion as a form of personal expression and a catalyst for societal transformation.

However, the study's reliance on secondary data limits real-time consumer behaviours and trends. Additionally, the focus on India may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other regions. Future research could explore cross-cultural perspectives and the evolving role of influencers in sustainable fashion.

In conclusion, the study highlights that the future of fashion lies in balancing innovation with cultural respect. As digital platforms and social media evolve, fashion will remain a key medium for expressing values, fostering inclusivity, and promoting sustainability. This will help create a more inclusive and responsible fashion industry moving forward.

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