

Comparison of Fashion consciousness among Hindu and Muslim Working Women of Uttar Pradesh

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Abstract

The present study dealt with “Comparison of Fashion consciousness among Hindu and Muslim Working Women of Uttar Pradesh” which involved the fashion consciousness of Hindu and Muslim working women of Uttar Pradesh. The study was taken up with the following objectives:- To compare the fashion consciousness among Hindu and Muslim working women. To conduct this study, the related literature on fashion consciousness, culture of Hindu and Muslim women was reviewed. The survey method was adopted for collection of Data. This Data was collected from Hindu and Muslim working women in the age of 25 to 55 years who fell in middle income group. It was distributed to respondents at their respective working place, i.e. schools, colleges, hospitals, offices etc. The respondents were 500, comprised of 250 of Hindu working women and 250 Muslim working women of Uttar Pradesh. The collected data was subjected to analysis. The study revealed that Hindu women were more fashion conscious and were adopting western culture.

Keywords: Fashion consciousness, clothing, religion, gender.

Introduction

“If human beings were not reacting to the other human beings in social situations, there would be no felt need for clothing beyond perhaps the protection it offers from cold.” At every stage of development, clothing helps to establish the identity of the individual to himself and to others with whom he interacts. Clothing is visual but non-verbal symbol and such symbols are ‘cues’ which select the status that is to be imputed to an individual and define the way others are to treat him. Clothing has the power to arouse feelings, thoughts and emotions in the mind of an observer that are not easily described.

Clothing is a constantly repeated aspect of human life, which meets the human requirements like modesty and protection. Proper clothing also add up charm and personal seductiveness, so it serves two fold purposes, on one hand it hides our shame, on the other hand it displays our seductiveness.

As the important function of clothing is that of defining a person’s status and position in the society, so it makes the wearer to walk with high notions in the society and also

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enable person to play various roles in the society appropriate to his self-concept and to the situation. Clothing can be a means of self-expression, a manifestation of aesthetic qualities and our outlet for creative ability. The force of personality of an individual and his success or failure in life influenced to a large extent by clothing.

1. Fashion consciousness among women: A fashion is a style that is accepted and used by the majority of a group at any one time, no matter how small that group is. A fashion is always based on some particular style, but not every style is a fashion.

Fashion is a term commonly used to describe a style of clothing worn by most of people of a country. Clothing is the key to who we are- it also plays a role in how far we can travel in certain circles. It has been said that 'the right clothing can grant us access to the right places and the right people'. A fashion usually remains popular for about 3 yrs. and then is replaced by yet another fashion. Even though there are a lot of changes in fashion most people do not easily accept the changes. Our fashion choices tell people who we are and what our standing is in society, in addition, our choices have an impact on our ability to succeed or to fail in certain areas of our lives. The topic of research for this proposal is an analysis of the ways in which clothing functions as a rejection of our culture, as well as a tool that can enhance success in life. (Sinha & Chopra, 2014)

Fashion appeal to many different groups can be categorized according to the group to which they belong. **High fashion** refers to a luxurious style accepted by fashion leaders. **Mass fashion** or **Volume fashion**, consists of

styles that are widely accepted. Fashion implies three components:-

- Style
- Change
- Acceptance

Style is any particular characteristic or look in apparel or accessories. Designers interpret fashion ideas into new style and offer them to the public.

Change means what we do today might be worthless tomorrow, but we have to accept it because we have to be in fashion. The speed of change is influenced by modern communications, marketing, advances in mass production and greater discretionary income. The fashion change has become more rapid because of the growth of urban centers and population mobility.

Acceptance implies that consumers must wear a style to make it a fashion. Acceptance by the public does not prove that a design is necessarily beautiful, only that its timing is right and that it fills a need. Acceptance by a large number of people makes a fashion successful. The degree of acceptance also provides clues to fashion trends for coming seasons. (Frings, 1999; Stone, 2004)

Fashion in 'textiles' denote the current style or modes of dresses. They are prevailing customs in dress especially as established by the dominant section of society or leaders in the world. Fashion is an expression of ideas and emotions. It is a feeling for line, form, shape, colour, light, shade and texture. Fashion never stands still; it is always moving forward, backward, upward, straight, crooked in some direction or the other.

In women's clothes two years of extra wear can make the difference between a smart wardrobe and a dowdy one. So it becomes essential to keep up to date with all the latest fashion news, studying the monthly specialist magazines, looking into the windows of smartest dress shops, visiting an occasional show, studying the fashion elite of society, but above all keeping alive and interested in the way you look, feel and dress. People who follow fashion slavishly are not following 'true fashion trends' but they are choosing a fashion able gimmick or new fad. (Gale, 2011 & Kaur, 1987)

Due to the western influences people have changed their outlook towards clothing. They are becoming more and more aware of the style and fit of the garment. As compared to the past, they are more fashion conscious now. Moreover, now there is an unparalleled range and variety of textiles in the market which makes the choice all the more difficult. Fashion styles are indicators of what fits in the times and what fits the people, and thus women going with the mainstream and dressing in a more fashion conscious way. There is no point in arguing that fashion is a far bigger thing for the female kind. That is the reason why there are so many fashion magazines for women fashion that is the reason why there is programs with ladies telling women how to dress. But fashion consciousness is something which cannot be prescribed. Fashion consciousness depending on the subject and says that a woman is able to choose the clothes which fit her best. Indian women are taking to western wear like never before. This trend is increasingly catching up both in big cities and small towns.

Attitudes concerning the relative importance of clothing are related to basic values. Those who have high religious and theoretic interests are inclined to put little emphasis upon clothes while those high in economic, political or aesthetic values assign greater importance to clothes. Attitudes towards the importance of clothes vary with the social economic status or occupation of the subject.

Worker or a member of the upper middle-economic group thinks that clothing is of greater importance while those of the upper and the lower socio-economic while those of less important. Variations may occur, however, not only in the attitude concerning the relative importance of clothing but also in the reasons which people feel make clothing important or not important.

Methodology

Methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study. It is the general research strategy that outlines the way in which a research project is to be undertaken and, identifies the method to be used in it. For this study propositions were formulated keeping in mind the Aims and Objectives of the study.

Research was designed in following steps:-

1. Locale of the study
2. Selection of sample
3. Selection of method
4. Formation of questionnaire
5. Pre-testing
6. Collection of the data
7. Analysis of data
 1. Coding
 2. Tabulation
 3. Statistical analysis



Fig. 1 Map of India



Fig. 1 Map of Uttar Pradesh

Result and Conclusions

Clothing contributes to the attainment of certain desires; physical comfort, social participation, conformity, prestige, self-expression, attracting the opposite sex, and aesthetic expression. The needs to satisfy these desires vary from one person to another, but each affects to some degree the individual’s attitudes towards clothing.

The result of the study conducted by investigator fashion consciousness among Hindu and Muslim working women of Uttar Pradesh has been discussed in this chapter with the respect of the objectives of the study and was carried out in three sections.

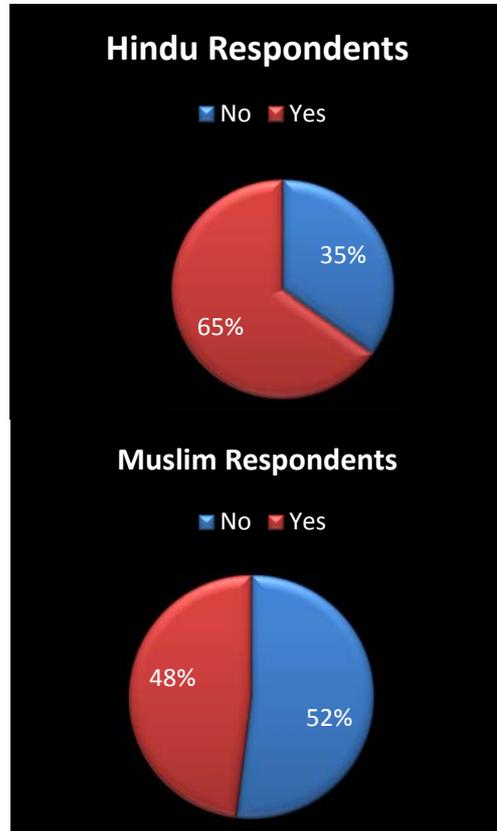
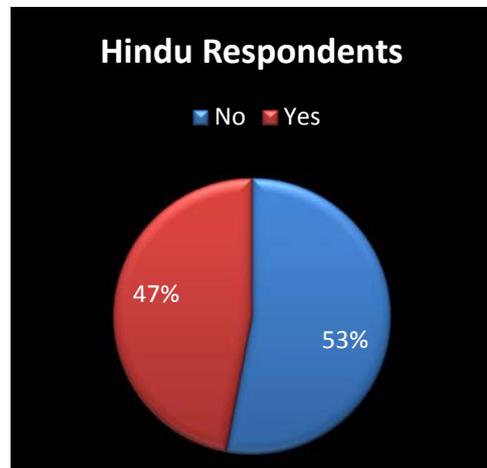


Chart No. 1: Respondents Following Fashion Hn=250, Mn=250

The above pie chart no. 3.1 depicts that maximum number of Hindu respondents followed fashion (65%) and 48% of Muslim working women followed fashion.



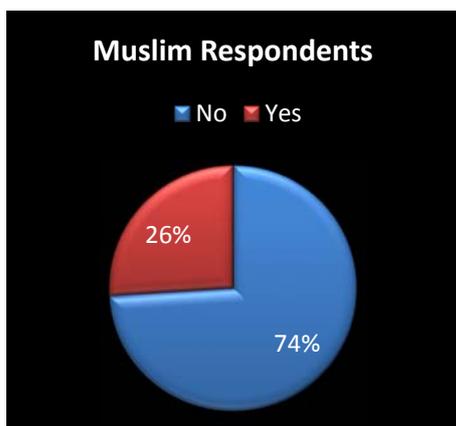


Chart no. 2:- Following fashion forecasting Hn= 250, Mn= 250

The above pie chart no.3.2 depicts that most of the Hindu respondents used fashion forecast (47%) and 26% Muslim respondents used fashion forecast for designing their garments

It may be concluded that most of the Hindu respondents used fashion forecast as compared to Muslim respondents.

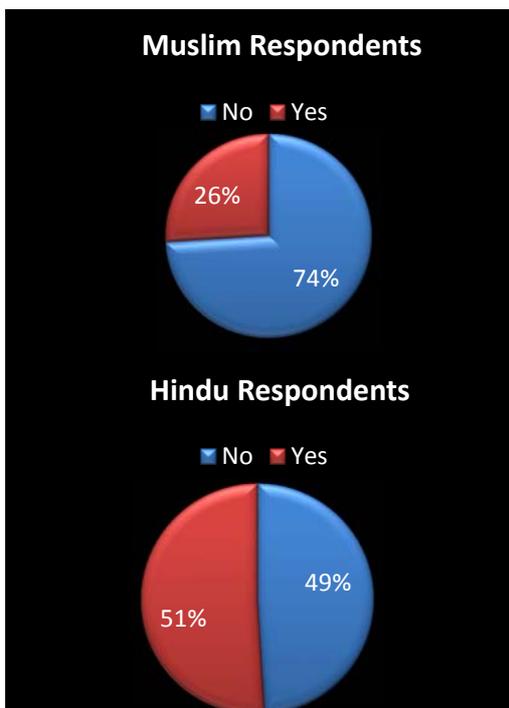


Chart 3: Usage of Branded clothes Hn= 250, Mn= 250

The above table no. 3.3 depicts that most of the Hindu respondents used branded clothes (51%) and 26% Muslim of respondents used branded clothes.

It may be concluded that Hindu working women brand conscious more than Muslim working women.

Religions		Hindu (%)	Muslim (%)	Chi Square	P-Value
Obscene	No	91	87	0.82	0.50
	Yes	9	13		
Lack of Information	No	82	89	1.98	0.23
	Yes	18	11		
Does Not fit in Life Style	No	80	91	4.88	0.04
	Yes	20	9		
Budget Problem	No	77	82	0.77	0.48
	Yes	23	18		
Society Permissions	No	79	61	7.71	0.01
	Yes	21	39		
Limited Usefulness	No	90	90	0.00	1.00

Table 1: Factors for rejecting a particular fashion Hn= 250, Mn= 250

The above table 3.1 depicts that most of the Hindu respondents had budget problem (23%) and most of the Muslim respondents had restrictions from society (39%). But significantly some of the Hindu working women thought that it does not fit in lift style (18%).

Religions		Hindu (%)	Muslim (%)	Chi Square	p-Value
Television	No	49	75	14.35	0.00
	Yes	51	25		
Fashion shows	No	74	63	2.80	0.13
	Yes	26	37		
Films	No	79	70	2.13	0.19
	Yes	21	30		
Window Display	No	92	94	0.31	0.78
	Yes	8	6		

Table 2: Sources (Visual media) for getting knowledge about new fashion/brands/designer's collections. Hn= 250, Mn= 250

The above table 2 depicts that maximum number of Hindu respondents got knowledge about new fashion, brands, and designer's collection through some visual media like television (51%), and fashion shows (26%) and Muslim respondents followed fashion shows (37%), films (30%)

and television (25%) for new fashion, brands and designer’s collections.

Religions Type of sources		Hindu (%)	Muslim (%)	Chi Square	p- Value
		News papers	No		
	Yes	18	22		
Fashion Magazine	No	73	66	1.16	0.36
	Yes	27	34		
Posters	No	71	62	1.82	0.23
	Yes	29	38		
Pamphlets	No	84	87	0.36	0.69
	Yes	16	13		

Table 3: Sources (publicity) for getting knowledge about new fashion / brands / designer’s collections. Hn= 250, Mn= 250

The above table 3 depicts that maximum number of respondents of both religions followed fashion magazines (Hindu 27% and Muslim 34%) and posters (Hindu 29% and Muslim 38%) to get knowledge about new fashion, brands and designer’s collection.

Religions Name of Magazines		Hindu (%)	Muslim (%)	Chi Square	P- Value
		Femina	No		
	Yes	31	6		
Elle	No	84	91	2.24	0.20
	Yes	16	9		
Women Era	No	88	92	0.89	0.48
	Yes	12	8		
Verve	No	94	90	1.09	0.44
	Yes	6	10		
Savvy	No	95	85	5.56	0.03
	Yes	5	15		
Vogue	No	94	89	1.61	0.31
	Yes	6	11		
New Women	No	89	84	1.07	0.41
	Yes	11	16		
Harpers Bazaar	No	93	91	0.27	0.80
	Yes	7	9		
Marie Claire	No	95	92	0.74	0.57
	Yes	5	8		
Grazia	No	100	94	6.19	0.03
	Yes	0	6		
Cosmopolitan	No	99	98	0.34	1.00
	Yes	1	2		

Table 4: Name of the Fashion magazine to follow latest Fashion Hn= 250, Mn= 250

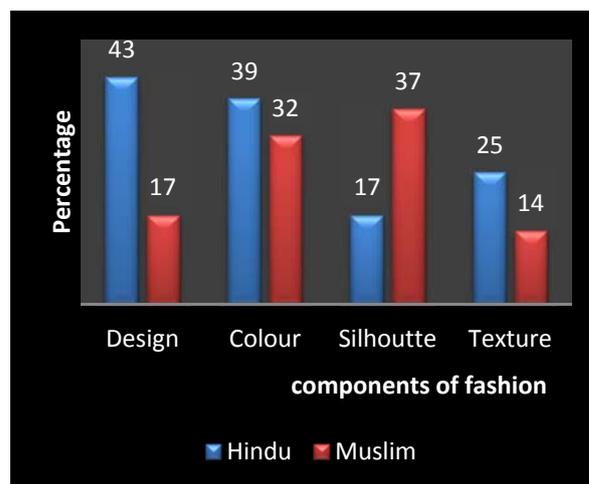


Chart 4: Components of fashion for adopting fashion. Hn= 250, Mn= 250

The above table 4 depicts that maximum number of Hindu working women followed some components of fashion while adopting fashion like design (43%) and colour (39%). Most of the Muslim working women followed latest fashion in terms of colour (32%) and silhouette (37%).

Religions Name of Magazines		Hindu (%)	Muslim (%)	Chi Square	P- Value
		Peer group	No		
	Yes	13	20		
Spouse	No	78	68	2.54	0.15
	Yes	22	32		
Friends	No	59	66	1.05	0.38
	Yes	41	34		
Neighbors	No	80	89	4.39	0.06
	Yes	20	11		

Table 5: Get knowledge about new fashion / brands / designer’s collections through friends/family Hn= 250, Mn= 250

The above table 4 depicts that maximum number of respondents of both religions got knowledge about fashion, brands, and designer’s collection from friends (Hindu 41% and Muslim 34%) and spouse (Hindu 22% and Muslim 32%).

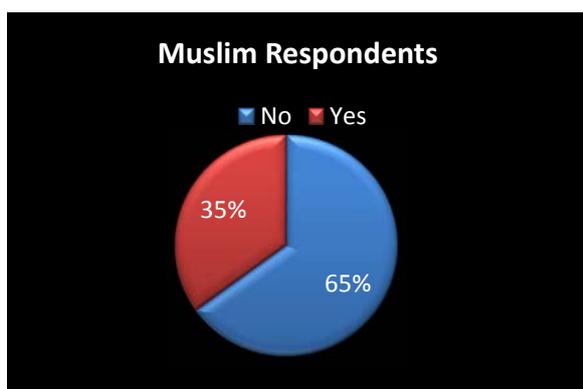
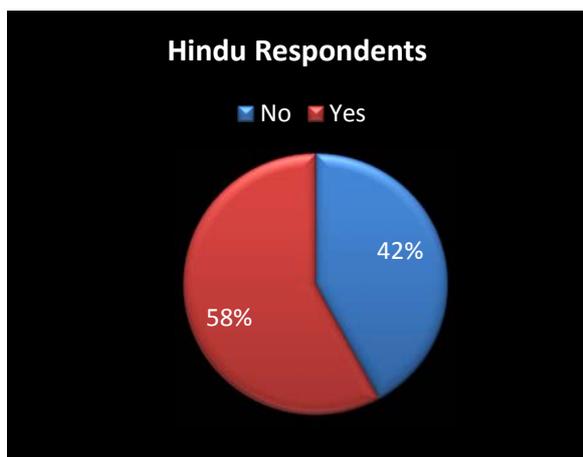


Chart 5: Feel out of place without fashionable clothes
Hn= 250, Mn= 250

The above pie chart 5 depicts that maximum number of Hindu working women felt out of place (58%) without fashionable clothes and 35% Muslim working women felt out of place without fashionable clothes.

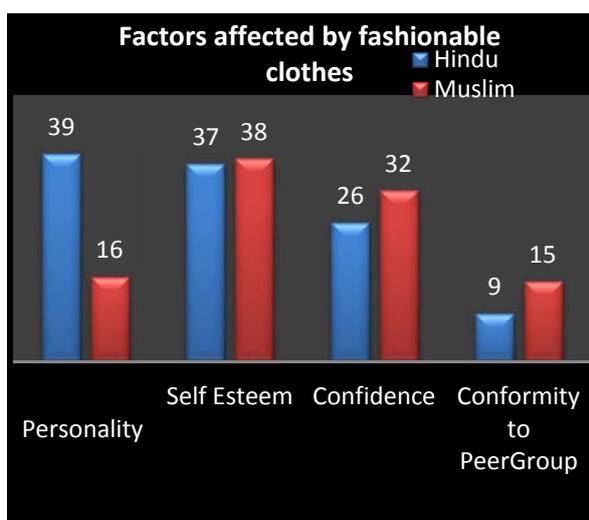


Chart 6: Personality enhancement after wearing fashionable clothes Hn= 250, Mn= 250

The above table no.3.6 depicts that most of the Hindu working women thought fashionable clothes affects their personality (39%) and self-esteem (37%). On the other hand, Muslim working women thought fashionable clothes affects their self-esteem (38%) and confidence (32%).

This section may be concluded that Hindu working women were more fashion conscious more than Muslim working women. They were brand conscious and used fashion forecasting to get knowledge about new fashion and brands.

Summary and Conclusion

The concept and functions of clothing has widened, due to the psychological and sociological factors attached to it. With the change in the concepts and functions clothing, interests have also changed. Clothing is found to be an important factor in the development of an individual's personality. Clothing is a constantly repeated aspect of human life, which meets the human requirements like modesty and protection has a significant role in society.

A fashion is a style that is accepted and used by the majority of a group at any one time, no matter how small that group is. A fashion is always based on some particular style, but not every style is a fashion. The researcher took up the study of the fashion consciousness among working Hindu and Muslim working women of Uttar Pradesh.

Conclusion

The study revealed that there were differences in the clothing practices of Hindu and Muslim working women. Hindu women were more fashion conscious and were adopting western culture, may be because of the less restriction of their religion. There are differences between the colours, texture and print choices.

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