

# The Role of COLOURS in Fashion



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*(Views expressed in this article are the personal opinion of the Authors.)*

### Introduction

Radical developments in fashion production and consumption have occurred over the past few decades. Far-reaching changes have dramatically transformed fashion supply-chain management and distribution at both national and international levels. In particular, radical innovations in communication and information technology have complicated globalization of markets and to changes in the nature of consumer demand.

National and international fashion events are no longer prerogative of just a small number of leading manufactures and key representative of the fashion press but rather are regarded as essential indicators to insure future commercial success.

Large retail organizations are active participants, and through the willing involvement of popular national media, consumers are conversant with the dominant stylistic themes of given fashion seasons. Fashion designer and catwalk models have become household names, and designer and retailer brand names have become familiar status symbols to many consumers internationally.

Fashion as a subject has become more firmly established in the academic literature, and in recent years, many useful insights have been offered, and more penetrating explanations of the processes of adoption and diffusion have become apparent.

### Style and Fashion

In order to build a conceptual framework to aid the understanding of the phenomenon of fashion, it is important to appreciate the relation between terms such as 'style' and 'fashion'. Confusion in the uses of such term is typified by the statement 'that is no longer in style', when what is meant is that a particular style is no longer in fashion. A style has been defined as a type of product that has one or more specific features or characteristics that distinguish it and make it different from other products of the same type.

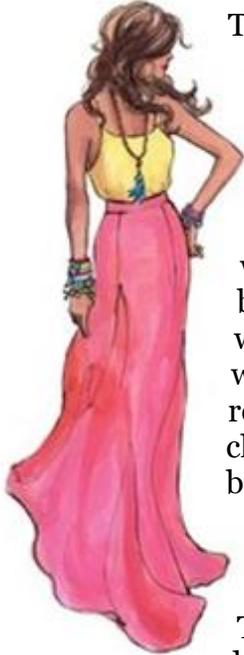
For example, caftan, chemise, empire, sarong, and shirtwaist are styles of dress. A widely recognized fashion authority, Paul H. Nystrom, defined fashion as 'the prevailing style at a given point in time' and style as a 'distinctive mode or method of expression, presentation, or conception'. A worthwhile distinction between the concepts was made by Koing when he noted that individual styles have a tendency to uniformity whereas fashions have a tendency to continual change. Only a small no of styles of any product category are acceptable to



fashion conscious consumers at any given time. These acceptable styles are deemed to be fashions.

A style does not become a fashion until it achieves some degree of consumer acceptance and will only remain a fashion for the duration of its popularity. Social acceptance is the very essence of fashion, as indicated by spores when he defined a fashion as:

***‘A style of dress that is temporarily adopted by a discernible proportion of members of a social group because, that chosen style is perceived to be socially appropriate for the time and situation’.***



The 'New Look' was a style of dress introduced in 1947 by Christian Dior and is a good example of style that instantly became a fashion to the consuming public.

The rulers of many European nations began to set fashions that were followed by the members of their courts during thirteenth century ... In France, in the mid of 1600s, King Louis XIII started wearing a wig to hide his baldness, fashionable Frenchman very soon began to shave their heads and wear wigs. In the mid 1800s, English women were said to have copied Queen Victoria's stout figure by wearing puffy dresses with padding underneath. After the industrial revolution began in the 18th century, the production of cloth and clothing became quick and inexpensive. Fashionable clothing styles began to spread rapidly from the upper classes to the middle and working classes. During the World War II (1909-1945) the use of various garments was restricted.

The globalization of economy of nations made the clothing styles global correspondingly. Experts found, youngsters of Jakarta, Buenos Aires, Mumbai, and Johansburg all tend to wear the same kind of clothing of same fashion. Although different cultures, local values and lifestyles have influences the styles. Religious beliefs have influenced the women fashion in general public. A woman in Iran covers them up with a Chador when she goes outside. However, she can wear T-shirt and blue jeans at home. In addition many people enjoy wearing their traditional clothing on holidays and other special occasions for reason of national or ethnic pride, like North Indian people like to wear Dhoti and Kurta at special occasions.

Fashion change includes both short term and long term fluctuations. Two types of trends were seen in 20<sup>th</sup> century seem likely to continue in the future. The first of these was the blurring of gender boundaries in clothing. During 19th century there occurred a sharp division between men's and women's clothing in decoration, colour, fabric and shape.

Now these distinctions have broken down, especially when women claim masculine items of clothing for themselves. Trousers and tailored suits are two most popular man's style now accepted equally by both men and women [1].

## Definition of Fashion

Fashion is a term used to describe a style of clothing used by most people of the country. A fashion remains popular for a few months or years before being replaced by another fashion. A product or activity is in fashion or is fashionable during that period of time when a large segment of society accepts it. After some time, however, the same product or activity becomes old-fashioned when the majority of people no longer accept it.

Fashion cloth manufacturers make the fashionable garments before one season, so as to provide the opportunity to manufacturer to share the market economics and intelligence in the lime light of fore-coming fashion trends by fashion forecasting.

A general method of fashion forecasting involves with some steps. In first step, a group of experts should be created to define the market intelligence and fashion forecasting, need of clothing and textiles. The group of experts indentifies the appropriate sources of such information, designs and system for the collection, analysis and implementation of such data. Experts may meet at each participating center four times per annum to analyze the fashion information and market trends.

## The way of Fashion Forecasting

All activities of fashion forecasting can be approach approached in three ways, approach an individual, by a group of person and by a class of person.

## Colour image Analysis (Individual or Group Analysis)



Colour is one of the elements of nature that made human living more aesthetic and fascinating in the world. Colours are supposed to be associated with emotions, human qualities, seasons, festivals and passions in our life. An individual or a group of experts should collect advertisement which are aimed for different consumer segment like men, women, children, teens both higher and

middle class market. Comparison of different colours and logos used by different manufacturers helps in colour image Analysis. Some Questions can help in colour analysis. They are listed below:

1. Which colour appears across all segments?
2. Which are restricted to a particular segment?
3. Can you trace any of these colours back to their cultural roots?
4. What is your prediction for the future popularity of these new colours?

Analysis of the appeal of these new colours in terms of consumer preference categories like age, ethnicity, income and gender may be a tool for fashion forecasting[2].

### **Colour Analysis (Individual Analysis)**

Backgrounds of advertisements and fashion editorial are the big sources of new colour. Generally these backgrounds provide a large sample of a fashion forward colour. Collection of dozen of colours, trade samples will improve your colour library. The concept colour swatches analysis using colour language in terms of hue, saturation and colour value may be possible using "looks-like" names.

### **New Colour Search:**

New colour search directed, that colour should attach to their cultural origin. Different fashion capital boutiques market departmental stores may be the sources for new colour search. Collection of some newly introduced colours in the market may helpful to find out the prediction of future popularity of these new colours. The final analysis of these colours remains in terms of consumer performance categories like age, ethnicity, income and gender.

### **Colour Searching through World Wide Web (Individual Analysis):**

World Wide Web can be helpful in the colour forecasting. Emphasis on sites related to fashion interiors and automobiles will provide a lot of information about fashion. Some sites are based on single colour and update this colour monthly. Some sites are quite similar to new periodic magazines issues. These magazines -like sites often have archives of past issues. A fashion researcher should check the archives for recent colour forecast or trend information continuously.

### **Sources of Information (Individual, Group Analysis):**

Collection of magazines of many categories from pets to body building and most esoteric subjects is helpful for inspiration for fashion forecasting. Magazines work for you like source, explore topics listed as source of colour ideas and platters. Emphasis on one or more directional themes, issues or interests will shape the fashion future.

### **Colour Forecasting**

Increasing of sales of a particular colour is the main driving force behind colour forecasting. Colour decides the customer's attraction, makes an emotional connection and attracts them upto the product. When the basic product remains the same, the only change in the colour gives a sense of something new. So many colour consultants are available, who helps on right colour selection to improve the sale of the product. Some colour consultants have specialization in colour and some have specialization in colour forecasting. Both type specialists work as a part of their overall product development function.

Some large companies are maintaining department, dedicated to setting colour trends for multiple lines. Professional fashion forecaster brings together, experts to collaborate

on forecast for industries like women wear residential and non-residential interiors [2, 3].

### **Significance of Colour:**

Some psychologists have worked on so many colour and some of which are revealed here.

These colours give a lot of information about wearer. Red, Dark Blue, Pink, Violet, Orange, Peach, or Apricot, Purple, Yellow, White, Green, Brown, Light Blue, Black



#### **Nature of Red Colour Wearer:**

Wearer is impulsive and energetic. Wearer is ambitious and like things to happen quickly when you want to do so. He or she likes to be the best in everything she do. Wearer may be a bit insensitive to the feeling of the other people, since you like to be the centre of attraction.

Red means Vital force, with your nervous activity urging you to achieve results and successful. Wearer's tendency always were red indicate the erotic nature. This energy can be use positively in the form of creative endeavor, leadership development and expansion. Maroon and brick red wearing tendency exhibit the great sense of humor [3].

#### **Nature of Orange, Peach or Apricot Wearer:**

The chooser of these colours is independent, self motivated and organizers. This colour of group indicates that they may be competent, impatient and self oriented. Their energy levels are high and wears are restless worker. You may be excitable and have the power of domination over the others. It indicates strong will power and competitiveness. Bright orange to the others is in a more effective way.

#### **Nature of Yellow Colour Wearer:**

Yellow has a great sense of innovation. Yellow colour cloth shows that wearer has stimulating personality and love to yellow colour exhibits activeness, involeness and zeal to face challenges.

Bright yellow represents spontaneity and communication. The lover of yellow colour found active, inspiring and likes to investigate. Yellow presses forward to the new, modern the developing ideas.

#### **Nature of Green Colour Wearer:**

The wearer of green colour will be cautious person and not inclined to trust others easily. Green colour lover remains observer in life but do not wished to get involved more than you have to. Humanity and serviceability remain on top. The choice of blue-green indicates the need of peaceful environment, wishing release from stress, and

freedom from conflicts or disagreement. Green colour wearers take pains to control the situation and its problems by preceding causality with sensitive feeling and very fine control on situations. The combination of pale yellow with green can help in development of optimistic attitude [4].

### **Indication of Dark Blue...**

The indication of dark blue is great depth of feeling, the lover of dark blue cannot live without tenderness, love and affection and feels the need to play and relaxation, in absence if it mental tension may be present. If the dark blue lover start to wear some blue green or green the health and self expression may be improve.

### **Violet Colour Indication**

Violet is the sign of sensitivity and easy compassionate. Wearer should be careful to choose their friends they should have same sensitivity level. They should work where you feel it's needed and be happy. The colour nears to magenta and more close to red improve self-confidence, vulnerability with protection.



### **Nature of Purple Colour Wearer:**

Purple is a sign of aspiration and wearer will always try to do the best in each group, including friends. Experts gave a suggestion to purple colour wearer to watch the things seriously, do not become arrogant, try to make more time for listening believe in systems, rules and regulations and try to wear orchid, grape violet colour to impose over others. Be careful to complete your personnel and spiritual requirements by Yoga and meditation to make your mind light and sensitive.

### **Indication of Brown Colour Wearer:**

Brown clothes are liked by honest person, who remains wants to work on earth with structured, supported life style. The persons, like brown, are lover of best things of life sensuous type, appreciating good food, drink and company who like to wear brown. Brown is the colour of our mother earth.

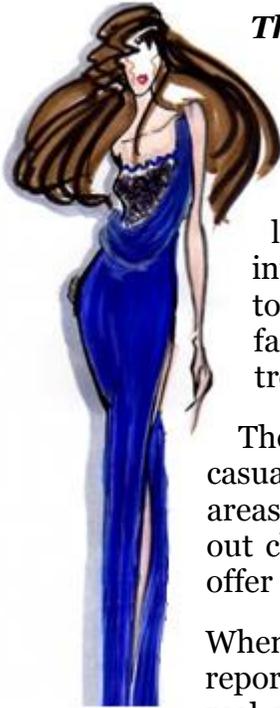
Brown is a protective colour and has the potential of bottling up emotions that wind a person into a group and afraid of outside world. There is a desire in brown wearer to be emotionally secure and accepted by outside world. The choice of brown colour needs to understand you and boundary of narrow thinking [5].

### **Cultural Indicators...**

The field of fashion requires an early warning system so that a special class of fabric and garment can be prepare and match with fashion trend in market segment. Time is a very sensitive parameter, a reputed, agile and money making firm will be able to capitalize on fashion forecasting.

Sometimes to see the glimmer is far in future and sometime a phenomenon is remain in the building stage. Waning of colours, dyes, pigments, fibres and processes is another signal of forthcoming fashion. When some lifestyles, avocation, feelings, lose culture dignity, which may be the good time to collect the data for finalize the next coming revolution in fashion [6].

### **City Trend Report: [7]**



***The trick to anticipate the future is not to determine what is likely to happen, but what has already happened that will create the future trend.***

City trend report can be possible when fashion experts, designers and photographers visits the leading fashion capitals in Europe like Paris, London, St Tropez and Milan and collect the fashion information. This information are analyzed using different software to produce a deep report including men's and women's wear retail fashion showrooms then prepare forward moving and emerging trends.

The major areas, which are covered under these reports, may be casual wear, street wear, and clubwear young branded fashion and office areas. All data should be discuss in friendly environment and try to point out clear-cut trend. The city trend reports are a valuable resource and offer thousands of ideas to inspire a fashion garment manufacturer.

When trends are street led, experts should emphasize on street photo reports, which give you a great idea that how the fashion translates into real sense. Experts also reveal that how styles are worn. Photo reports are also a great way to look at other areas of fashion from accessories to garments. Ten trends from hottest fashion Cities of Europe will give a better idea about forthcoming fashion.

### **Presentation of Fashion Forecasting:**

The fashion-forecasting experts prepare for a forecasting presentation by aggressive ideas, signals, signs, innovations, hints and indications. The preparation of presentation starts from travelling the fashion capitals by person, online and by video, visiting crowds' showrooms and boutiques, watching trendsetters, scanning media and reading everything possible that might relate to fashion change. The fashion-forecasting experts satisfy her/ his senses and all possibilities.

Identification of fashion trend is a necessary and first step, but this step is not sufficient alone. Some time forecaster tries to find out some relation between some trends. This process evolved some valuable information for audiences. Keep creativity on top, is the process of making a quality presentation to illustrate key points. The interaction between presenter and audience depends on designing not only the content, but also the visual style.

### **Lewis Banscomb of IMB said:**

*People rarely distinguish among data, information, knowledge and wisdom. Yet they are as different from one another and as interlocking as starch molecules, flavorful memory of a superb morning croissant.*

### **The Trend of Fashion Changes:**

Trend watchers said that observations are not ample. If the fashion forecaster wants to take the advantage of fashion trend, he needs a framework for explaining how the trend began and its likely path within a social system. Some fashion direction theories -tickle up, tickle down and trickle across make prediction easier by pointing to the likely starting points for a fashion trend. This will help in find out that the expected direction that trend will take and how long the trend will last.

Some fashion experts analyze the dynamics of fashion as waves striking a beach. Some waves race headlong for a shallow beach, swell rapidly to a tremendous foaming top, then drops abruptly with a thud. Is this not precisely what happens with fads? When other waves move gradually upward, curl over in a quiet, leisurely way, then break with little or no force. Is this not precisely the movement of sane, properly conceived style cycles? They are slow to develop, hold their own for a time, and then subside rather than collapse.

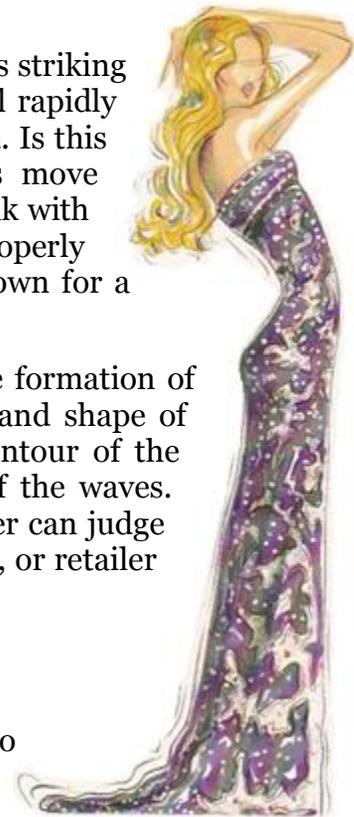
Imagine a forecaster standing on the beach and watching the formation of fashion waves. How far out can she see? What are the size and shape of waves coming toward the beach? What is the underlying contour of the bottom and how does that influence the shape and speed of the waves. When will the waves arrive and with what force? If a forecaster can judge factors and calculate, then that gives a designer, manufacturer, or retailer a change.

### **The Future of Fashion Forecasting**

The market is that place where the factors of fashion lock into one pattern, hold it briefly, and then cascade into a new configuration with the slightest jar to the equilibrium. In the market, those shifts may correlate with changes in lifestyles, tastes technological developments, shift in the price of the raw material and other such factors. The executive of apparel manufacturing company requires a balancing act both anticipation of future developments and improvisation in the face of change.

### **Design Concept and Style Directions:**

The mental map of fashion experts for marketplace, where innovations takes place, the supply network of textiles/ apparel industry and retail conduit to consumers. Fashion forecasters also have another map of fashion shows and seasons. They think one season ahead when consumer will demand for summer swimsuit. Forecasters use these mental maps to organize their observations of directional information. Since innovations rarely



apply to the entire marketplace, information must be tagged for the appropriate price point, category, and classification. In this way, forecasters turn random bits of data into useful information for decision support.

## **Future of Fashion Industry**

Designers are using advanced digital technologies to design textiles. Latest innovation in hardware and digital imaging has given a boost to this precision-oriented industry. Assyst International, a Bangalore based firm, has successfully developed utilities like assyGRAPH, LITE integrated into assyFORM to design garments. Two more prominent software systems available in the fashion industry today are the PAD system and the Lectra systems. Each system has made an important contribution to further creativity and efficiency of the industry.

Computer application such as Computer Aided Design (CAD) and Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAM) are rapidly becoming the back bone of many design and manufacturing companies, and are making the fashion industry very technical.

Fashion is everywhere, from MTV to internet, from Paris to runway to the local shopping centre. Fashion touches every facet of our lives. Fashion helps define our individuality, creates identity and develops as we develop to ourselves.

Many of us have dreamed about working in the fashion industry but have been plagued by doubts. Most doubts are centered about our own creative potential, and our language ability. Actually with over 700 job categories are available in the fashion industry and with the right training [7].

## **Conclusion**

Fashion producers and retailers will be faced with fierce competition from providers of other goods and services in the quest to gain a higher proportion of consumers' disposable income. Success in fashion production will be dependent on responding to consumer demand and not on expecting demand to be created after the goods have been produced. Meanwhile, success in retailing will be dependent on undertaking the task of finding the new and exciting, editing out the banal and mundane, and presenting the consumer with the world's most desirable package, which is, of course, what the consumer will demand.

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