

Analyzing the Transformation in Styles of Male and Female Attires Depicted in Fashion Photographs of Pakistani Print Media

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Abstract

Print media holds a significant influence on transforming the attires of males and females. Attire industry is not only one of the largest industries in the world, but it is an integral and essential part of our life. The main objective of the research project is to assess the transformation in male and female attires through fashion photographs from selected newspapers in Pakistan. It is assumed that media can transform and replace a society's cultural norms and values. The present research examined the role of fashion photographs published in Pakistani print media, play a significant role in transformation in the styles of attires of males and females. A content analysis was conducted, and fashion photographs of three leading English newspapers (Dawn, The News, and The Nation) and three leading Urdu newspapers of Pakistan (Jang, Nawa- I- waqt and Express) were analysed through systematic sampling procedure. The findings revealed that most of the male models were wearing Western dresses, whereas most of the female models were wearing traditional dresses. The results of the analysis explicate the significant difference between the dressing of groups based on dressing Fashion designers, particularly those from Pakistan, and the media should exercise caution when creating and promoting fashion trends. It is imperative to incorporate styles and trends to cultivate awareness among the next generation regarding traditional attire, while also acquainting them with contemporary styles and trends.

Keywords: Attire, Print Media, Photographs, Transformation.

1. Introduction

Fashion photographs are simply taken with the intention of showcasing (or, in some cases, alluding to) certain items of attires or accessories, typically with the goal of recording or promoting the fashion photographs of stylish attires (Hall-Duncan, 2010). The field of photojournalism has also been significantly altered by the most recent developments in imaging technology (as cited in Akbar, Raza, & Hussain, 2012). There have been a lot of amazing photographers who have gifted us with their art during the past century and the attitude toward photography has changed as times have changed. Many fashion photographers now see themselves as artists instead of seeing their work as a means of supporting themselves (Garcia, 2004). For a very long time, the phrases "attire" has been used to refer to apparel and ornamentation in terms of culture, history, and

materials. While the term Clothing/dress is used for daily attire that represents social status, work, religious association, etc., "costume" also frequently denotes special instance and theatrical customs of dressing and decorations (Lindsay, King & Russel (2012).

The concept of culture refers to the collective representation of symbols, ideas, norms, values, artifacts, and behaviours exhibited by a particular group of individuals. (Rana & Chishti, 2019). The social situation demonstrates how seriously Pakistani society is impacted by the "Western community's" cultural blending. Vulnerable sections of society are attempting to modernize their lives through a process known as westernization. The wealthy and mostly westernized Pakistani elites (the rich) inspire the middle and lower classes to emulate them (Rana & Chishti, 2019). Therefore, culture is a process that spreads civilizational values through objects of value or other forms of value (Campbell, Martin, & Fabos, 2014). It is considered a practice that brings the standards of a society all the way through products or further meaning-making appearances. (Campbell et al., 2014). The concept of culture refers to the collective representation of symbols, ideas, norms, values, artefacts, and behaviours exhibited by a particular group of individuals. (Rana & Chishti, 2019). The world may not always be aware of it, but Pakistan has always been a very trendy nation, according to renowned fashion designer Maheen Khan (Rehman, 2017).

Fashion and attire are prominent international enterprise with a market value of 1.3 trillion dollars, supporting a workforce of over 300 million individuals across the globe (The State of Fashion 2019: An 'Urgent Awakening' for the Industry, 2018). It serves as a substantial economic entity and plays a crucial role in driving global GDP (Digital & Experiential Luxury 2019). The sector functions within a very competitive market that is mostly controlled by prominent multinational corporations. In contemporary times, notwithstanding the profound financial crisis of the previous decade, the fashion sector has achieved rapid expansion and undergone extensive changes. Based on the market study conducted by prominent international consultancy firms such as McKinsey, Deloitte Group, and BCG, it is evident that fashion companies are currently operating within a very dynamic and competitive business landscape. This environment is characterized by frequent and abrupt shifts, as well as a growing level of uncertainty (Gazzola, 2020).

Urdu, English, and a few regional languages are among the 11 languages that print media publish in. The print media also operate under the English and Urdu media division. They are extensively read and dominant among people and are conservative, folkloristic, religious, and sensational. Moreover, English newspapers in Pakistan are considered, generous, and specialized. The higher echelons of society as a whole, particularly the elites, businesspeople, and opinion leaders, are influenced by English print media (Mezzera & Sial, 2010).

Furthermore, cultural transformation Theory provides the ground for the present research. This theory is helpful to understand the role of fashion journalism through English and Urdu newspapers of Pakistan in cultural transformation.

Statement of the Problem

The Pakistani fashion industry is one of the largest industries among various industries in the country. Newspapers' fashion content, specifically photographs, play a pivotal role in dissemination of latest trends regarding attires. The transformation in styles and trends reflects the transforming cultural societal values. Little research exists on this critical relationship changing styles and role of print media, however. Wiest (2016) identified that the mass media as noteworthy transmitters of cultural communication and significant determinants of culture, through a multifaceted process.

2. Objectives of the Study

Based on the literature discussed earlier, the following are the objectives of research for the present study:

1. To evaluate the type of male and female fashion styles published in English and Urdu newspapers of Pakistan.
2. To trace the process of transformation in attires of males and females.

3. Literature Review

Le Masurier (2020) narrated that fashion photography is rarely analysed by scholars in the fields of cultural or journalism studies although it has increasingly become a subject for investigation in fashion studies (p.2). Lamb (2016) further writes that while photographs have the power to enhance realistic particulars of its themes, on the other hand photographs in fashion newspapers and magazines perform Photoshop or further image manipulation software to enhance the quality of photographs. Deficiencies and short comings like gloomy looks are transformed into a glamorous look through such manipulation.

Méndez Moreno et.al (2018) discussed the idea of fashion photography as a type of message and communication instrument utilized for the demonstration and dissemination of attire. These types of descriptions, which are displayed in community places, have an impact on society by engaging bystanders in a tax discourse that informs them informally about the gratitude and understanding of apparel beauty, which could potentially even because adolescent disorders with adolescents trying to fit into the stereotypes set by fashion. Fashion photographic presentation creates and overemphasis upon numerous social groups, distributing societal messages across civilization, social class, gender, and age to establish who is better than others, standardizing, and discerning in contradiction of all those who do not fit the images of ideal fashion standards of men and women. So, given that these images constantly attempt to change who we are and what we are capable of, being presented by people who are perceived as superior to us, it leads to people learning to understand, describe, and critique these types of images.

According to Akbar, Raza, and Hussain (2012), increased interest in photographic communication has created new opportunities for newspaper and magazine publishers to generate revenue. Photographers increasingly contribute images towards the creation of interpretive picture stories and photographic essays. In the current era of colorful media, when the emphasis is more on design than substance, we cannot dismiss the significance of such images. The reader may become interested in the photographs if they are interesting. Majority of readers focus on the photographs, however some also read the entire story.

According to Hall-Duncan (2010) a fashion photo is simply a photo taken purposely to demonstrate (or in a number of cases refers to) attire or accessories, generally for the purpose of cataloguing or selling fashion. Brennen (2010) provides a concise debate of the chronological context relation to modern photojournalism and addresses the role of photojournalism in modern society.

Brennen (2010) focused on the function of photojournalism in modern society and provided a brief assessment of the historical backdrop surrounding recent discussions of photography. This discussion also focused on the invention of photography and its alleged capacity to offer reliable accounts of "reality" while describing how photojournalism evolved over the twentieth century.

Furthermore, Arnold (2009) stated as fashion is not just attire, or a collection of images. Rather, it is the dramatic nature of visual and worldly culture that performs an imperative role in social and cultural life. It is an important economic control, along with the top ten companies in developing countries.

Culture is one of the most significant influences for fashion photography; Ruggerone (2006) demonstrated that the creators of these images are always greatly influenced by current artistic trends and aesthetic standards. In the study, for example one of the companies' employees was very aware of the potential impact of their images on the public; most of the women in their photos appeared to be typical women. The second company's workers did not see themselves as representing the real world of consumers and did not think they could affect how the consumer saw herself. Their images embodied the idea of the masculine gaze through the objectification of women.

Ruggerone (2006) coined that the sophistication of the photograph is crucial. When the techniques employed to create these photos are examined, it becomes clear that aesthetic standards play a much larger role in the work than sales and marketing objectives do. The majority of experts agreed that the competition with other brands in the drive to generate innovative visual communication was a key issue. Their primary objective was to create an image that would stand out and be considered extraordinary enough in the eyes of specialists to encourage them to start a new trend in fashion communication.

According to Garcia (2004), fashion photography has been influenced by the photographer who is behind the lens because it's an art. Some photographers are conservative, while others are not, and their personality may be reflected in their photographs. The majority of photographers admit that their environment has an impact on their work. The type of camera used, the fashion of the time, the film used, the camera settings, as well as other factors can all be relevant to different eras of fashion photography. The way each artist uses the camera and the associated techniques results in a diversity of images that have impacted modern photographers.

Rafiqi (2002) wrote that contemporary commercial fashion photographers often have unconventional thoughts because these are the traits of ideas and concepts that set them apart from other commercial fashion photographers. Smartphones can replace the need for instruments in the creation of photography nowadays, but not all commercial fashion photographers necessarily have the same caliber of notions and ideas.

4. Hypothesis

H1. There is likely to be difference in the styles male and female attires in the fashion photographs of English and Urdu newspaper.

H2. Males are depicted in formal attires as compare to females.

5. Methodology

Content analysis has been performed, taking into account the nature of the study. Quantitative research refers to a systematic investigation that addresses a specific subject by testing a theoretical framework, employing numerical data, and analyzing it through statistical methods. The objective of these procedures is to ascertain the validity of the predictive generalizations posited by a theory (Gupta & Gupta, 2022).

From January 2016 to December 2019, this study examines the photographs published in fashion editions of Pakistan's three top English newspapers, Dawn, The News, and The Nation, as well as three top Urdu newspapers, Jang, Nawa I Waqt, and Express. A pilot research study revealed that Sunday editions usually feature fashion-related information. After doing the calculation 624 issues of six newspapers out of 1248 were selected for content analysis through systematic sampling procedure. A total of 3120 photographed were chosen for analysis of English and Urdu newspapers of Pakistan.

Dress type of males and females were measured under the following emergent categories such as: traditional, western, fusion and unrealistic. These were further divided as casual, formal, wedding and others.

Fashion photographs are measured as catalogue, high fashion, street fashion and editorial photography.

To assess inter coder reliability; a pretest was conducted on randomly selected 15 percent of sampled data. According to the Krippendorff's alpha formula ($K\alpha$), the overall inter coder reliability was .79.

6. Findings and Analysis

Table 1

Classification of Male Attires

	Traditional	Western	Fusion	Unrealistic
Casual	76(25.5%)	185 (36%)	43(33.5%)	15(100%)
Formal	117(39.2%)	192(48.8%)	67(52.5%)	0 (0%)
Wedding	105(35.2%)	120 (15%)	18(14.1%)	0 (0%)
Others	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0(0%)	0 (0%)
Total	298 (100%)	497(100%)	128(100%)	15(100%)

$N=938$

Table 1 presents the further classification of males' traditional western, fusion and unrealistic attires in terms of casual wear, formal wear, wedding wear and others. In the aforementioned table percentages are drawn from their total representation, not from the sample size. The analysis of the findings shows that Western (185, 37.2%) and unrealistic (15,100%) type of attires are mostly depicted in casual wear while traditional (117,39.2%) and fusion (67,52.3%) dresses are presented as formal wear.

Table 2

Attire Style of Males

Style	Frequency	Percentage
Shalwar Kameez	92	9.9%
Sherwani	57	6.1%
Track Suit	111	11.9%
Shorts Shirts	21	2.2%
Three Piece Suit	164	17.5%
Two Piece Suits	301	32%
Jeans Coat	39	4.2%
Jeans Shirt	134	14.2%
Prince Suit	19	2%

$N=938$

Attire style of male models is presented in table 2, the analysis of findings shows that majority of male models (301,32%) depicted in English and Urdu dailies of Pakistan were wearing Two piece suits and three piece suits (164,17.5%) and very few of them (19, 2%) were depicted in prince suits. It is noteworthy to mention that 92(9.9%) models were portrayed as wearing salwar kameez in the fashion photographs of English and Urdu dailies.

Table 3

Classification of Female Attires

	Traditional	Western	Fusion	Unrealistic
Casual	581(48.4%)	180(39.1%)	145(39.8%)	85(53.7%)
Formal	345(28.7%)	231(50.2%)	167(45.8%)	44(27.8%)
Wedding	274(22.8%)	49(10.7%)	49(13.4%)	06(3.7%)
Others	18 (1.5%)	0(0%)	03(0.8%)	23(14.5%)
Total	1200 (100%)	460(100%)	364(100%)	158(100%)

N=2182

Table 3 presents the further classification of the traditional western, fusion and unrealistic female attires in terms of casual wear, formal wear, wedding attires and others. In the aforementioned table percentages are drawn from their total representation not from the sample size. The analysis of the findings shows that traditional 581(48.4%) and unrealistic 85(53.7%) type of attires are mostly depicted in casual wear while western 351(43.5%) and fusion 346 (49.7%) attires are presented in formal wear mostly.

Table 4

Attire Style of Females

Style	Frequency	Percentage
Shalwar Long Kameez with Dupatta	216	9.8%
Shalwar Short Kameez with Dupatta	94	4.3%
Shalwar Kameez without Dupatta	215	9.8%
Jeans Kurta	123	5.6%
Jeans Top	72	3.3%
Maxi	150	6.9%
Long Skirt Top	215	9.8%
Trouser Shirt Long	402	18.4%
Trouser Shirt Short	283	13.0%
Short Gown Trouser	211	9.6%
Long Gown Trouser	74	3.4%
Lehnga Choli	54	2.6%
Lehnga Long Shirt	23	1.0%
Long frock	23	1.0%
Kaftan	10	0.4%
Jeans Jacket	17	0.7%
Jeans Kurta	216	9.8%

N=2182

Attire styles of female models is presented in table 4 the analysis of findings shows that the Trouser Shirt Long 402 (18.4%) and Trouser Shirt short 283 (13%) are most frequently used dress in fashion content of Pakistani English and Urdu dailies. Whereas, there is not a significant difference in usage of long skirt to 215(9.8%), Shalwar Long Kameez with Dupatta 216(9.8%), Shalwar Kameez without Dupatta 215(9.8%), Short Gown Trouser 211 (9.6%) and Jeans Kurta 216(9.8%). However, kaftan 10(.4%) is least used dress in in fashion photographs of Pakistani English and Urdu dailies.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

The analysis of the findings showed that female models were covered more in fashion content of selected newspapers as compared to male models. The findings of the study show that there exists

a difference in the attire of male and female models in selected newspapers. However, there was more variation in the attires of female models as compared to males' models in the fashion photographs of selected newspapers. It is also in line with the findings of Wasylikiw et al., (2009) who stated that while giving coverage to female models in print media their appearance is highlighted more. Generally, female models appearing in print media were more likely to be presented to an emphasis on their appearance rather than on their performance. These finding also supported the findings of de Medeiros Dantas (2021) that there is difference in the attire of male and female models styles in fashion photographs even in preference of colours.

The results concluded that significant variation in attire was observed over the selected time period. It is also in line with the findings of Lezema (2017) that the fashion industry is growing at a fast and furious pace as new trends are being promoted on a monthly basis, and ultimately, these fast changing trends are also visible on media.

The presence of media in Pakistani culture, particularly among the elite class, facilitates the exercise of socio-cultural freedom, enabling them to embrace and adopt contemporary trends disseminated by the media. In recent years, there has been a notable increase in the educational attainment and economic stability of both males and females in Pakistan. Moreover, their progressive and open-minded perspectives have emerged as a significant contributing factor in empowering them to make courageous decisions. Furthermore, the presence of a malleable political climate has had a significant influence on the adoption of Western fashion trends. The process of Westernization holds significant relevance in the context of transformation. Globalization has significantly influenced the sartorial choices of both Pakistani men and women. It is imperative to incorporate styles and trends in order to cultivate awareness among the next generation regarding traditional attires, while also acquainting them with contemporary fashion styles and trends. If the media continues to uphold this perspective, it is foreseeable that our generation will encounter challenges in discerning between Western and Eastern cultures in the future.

In spite of limitations, there are theoretical and practical implications that can be drawn from this research. This study has made a theoretical contribution to the existing literature of media and cultural studies.

In future researches, qualitative content analysis can be performed on fashion content published in leading newspapers. Content analysis of Pakistani and international fashion magazines could be examined as well. Future researchers further may explore different research designs including survey, content analysis, semiotic analysis and discourse analysis.

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