

# CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY: THE FUTURE OF FASHION FORECASTING

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## ABSTRACT

*“When you are in the futurology business there are three problems that you run into. First of all, you're wrong. Second of all, you get the timing wrong even when you're right. And third of all, when you're right you're never believed”*

*-Woudhuysen, 1992.*

*Sustainability has been an important topic in many disciplines for over two decades now, and its urgency keeps rising. At the same time, conceptual understanding of sustainability remains quite vague and often too context-specific, which poses a challenge for sustainability research. Among the four dimensions of sustainability (environmental, economic, social, and cultural), it is the latter aspect that is least examined. However, understanding how culture contributes to the long-term sustainability of communities and societies is one key to a holistic understanding of sustainability itself, and how it can impact the future of fashion forecasting. This paper argues that the ethic of long-term sustainability can be informed by fashion forecasters in their embodied, institutionalized form. The resilience potential of fashion forecasters is important for configuring the long-term impact of cultural aesthetics and its place for future generations. As fashion forecasters struggle with addressing the consequences of economic issues and finding new models of conducting their temporal business, their very existence and preservation contribute to the long-term sustainability of communities and societies as a whole. This paper suggests two avenues for further research: first, the values and ideals embedded in strategic priorities of fashion forecast and promoted through their reports and programmes contribute to society and fashion industry and serve as the foundation of long-term institutional survival; second, by fulfilling their missions through both short and long-term forecast and acting ‘culturally sustainable,’ to ensure its endurance, thus vouching for safe interests of future generations along with advanced innovations. Further, the paper focuses on giving a reasonable solution supporting both the stances.*

**Keyword:** - Cultural History, Cultural Sustainability, Cultural Studies, Fashion, Forecasting, Futurology, Singularity, Trend analysis

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Forecasting is used in almost every area of business today. Accurate analysis of consumer trends is vital in informing brand direction and development, in the creation of relevant products and services and ultimately in ensuring their success. Most notably associated with the fashion industry, trend forecasting is still a relative newcomer but has fast become one of the most important weapons in a retailer’s competitive armoury.

In a fast-moving and crowded marketplace, identifying ‘what’s hot and what’s not’ is crucial in staying one step ahead of the competition. In fact, clothing and fashion are carriers of wide range of ideological meanings. The fashion trends portray a visual culture and style of dressing that models the consumer identity in a specific environment. The social agenda of these fashion trends is to express the consumer’s identity in terms of lifestyle choices and their attitude. The lifestyle choices change from one period to another period. In other words, they suggest the pattern & manner of dressing befitting an occasion that sets forth a standard. These clothing standards are in fact derived from the prevailing social values and their emotional expectations.

The clothes we wear tell stories of our culture and our heritage, things that can’t easily be shrugged on and taken off at will. Tradition is also passed down in the creation and construction of our clothes. The way things are made, the materials, and the process, are all embedded in our communities and cultures. Take block printing in India, or Miao embroidery, these traditions are the livelihoods of the skilled craftspeople who make them, and the lifeblood of their communities. Most of the best tweeds and tartans are still made on the islands of Scotland, and haute couture

requires ateliers in Paris. These skills are generally passed down from person to person, generation to generation, learned through hands-on apprenticeships by ever-shrinking amounts of people.

Clothes are quite literally embedded in the fabric of our daily lives. But they have a hidden history: a past that goes hand-in-hand with the history of the human race itself. When we put on a shirt in the morning, wrap a scarf around us when we're cold, or slip into a fancy dress for a party, we're inhabiting our history, our politics, and our culture, creating a visual shorthand of who we are.

## 2. MOTIVATION

The motivation is to restore the cultural essence while evolving into a new future with upcoming technologies. With fashion moving more towards singularity and repetitive trends globally, leading further research in cultural sustainability, to work towards the cultural commitment of the designers and brands, to sustainably create volumes with consideration of their responsibility for sustaining or continuing one's tradition, heritage, craftsmanship, method, and identity as a part of the value.

Cultural art and history need to be incorporated in the trend forecasting to further motivate and direct designers for the same, hence, increasing the scope to explore and further innovate different products. Such a cultural influence incorporated with new technologies will not only lead to exquisite creations but will further promote multicultural fashion adjoining all the cultures around the world with each other.

The objective for this research is to classify forecast on cultural basis to cater maximum customers with the reflection of their customs and art, not only for small market segment business but also, for the mass retailers to be able to capture the market well with the right ideology towards its customers considering all factors while keeping its USP extant.

## 3. PROBLEM FINDING

The issue of plagiarism is also pertinent and one criticism levelled at forecasters is that they act as a conduit for larger retailers to create identikit copies of other designers' work. This only serves to alienate independent designers, making them less likely to engage with the forecasters and forecasting services who look to them not only as a source of inspiration but also as potential future clients.

All this raises the question of industry sustainability. As the brands that rely on forecasting to stay ahead of the game find themselves no longer distinguishable from the competition it undermines, the notion that trend forecasting can be an inspirational and creative resource becomes questionable.

This reliance on trends and trend forecasting, and fashion's need for immediacy is itself creating potential long-term problems for both forecasters and the industry as a whole. The mass-market retail sector is increasingly seen as more reactive than innovative and despite the number of agencies now operating, many major companies are obtaining information from the same place, causing the high street in particular to become overburdened with facsimile products.

A cautious retail sector, afraid of taking chances or going against current market consensus is affecting the forecaster's ability to offer and encourage radically new ideas or conceptual ways of thinking. The speed of the fashion cycle has also caused a shift in favour of highly profitable but short-term, micro trends, allowing less opportunity for meaningful long-term analysis.

The capabilities of the internet and the opportunities therein have also bought the founding forecasting services a new set of challenges. The growth of social media is a valuable promotional tool with which to raise a company's profile, and in the case of forecasters, a platform with which to entice potential clients with titbits of information. However, the popularity of fashion blogging and the growing number of freelance forecasters and smaller agencies has been both friend and foe for those currently dominating the scene.

This new medium has made the once closely guarded world of trend information and analysis more accessible to all levels of the market and to consumers themselves. Bloggers are a great source of inspiration to other forecasters but many are now employed by, or act as consultants, to brands who feel that they may have their finger more firmly on the fashion pulse or a more in-depth knowledge of their own demographic, often at the expense of their long-standing counterparts.

For established companies who rely on subscriptions to generate revenue, the challenge has been to compete with this new generation, not only in terms of cost, but also in terms of being seen as leaders in up-to-the-minute and relevant trend information. However, the increase in accessibility has greatly raised the profile of forecasting and its role within fashion. This heightened awareness is a key element in the expansion of the industry as more and more

companies view signing up to such services as an essential part in the race to keep up with the demands of a more trend savvy consumer.

The future holds our destiny. Throughout history people have attempted to see into the future- predicting what will happen before it has occurred. So, what does the future actually hold? This is a question that has been asked many, many times, yet its answer is beyond our reach. Since our present decision and views is what makes the difference in future.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Phase 1: Literature Review

Research for Trend Forecasting with respect to cultural view, is in its nascent stage. Survey of designers and researchers in current field helps in analysing, interpreting and critically evaluating the subject which paves the path for further development and breakthroughs. The objective of this literature review is to extract the competencies mapped to date for additional expansion.

**Jattin Kochhar**, a noted fashion designer from India, remarks, "Fashion designers all over the world promote the color of fruits and vegetables of the season in their collection. If you wear these colors, you will never be out of fashion. There is logic to it as people can connect better with those colors." There is no doubt that surroundings influence the fashion of that particular region, immensely!

**Nithyaprakash Venkatasamy**, an assistant professor who currently works at the Department of Fashion Technology at the Bannari Amman Institute of Technology points out that fashion trends are carriers of a, "wide-range of ideological meanings. (Venkatasamy, 2015)". Venkatasamy goes on to point out that fashion trend forecasting really takes place through ethnographic studies because as our living environment changes, so does our attitude and outlook on life. At any particular point in time, this directly influences the choices we make in what we wear and tells the world who we are.

**Barnard, 2002** relating to the beliefs and attitudes of the peers or social group these individuals belong to the Endeavour to draw a fine line between the existing patterns of style and their appearance by dressing in a trendy manner. In other words, the intention is to win friends or appreciate them by communicating their values in the form of clothing and dress as appearance is a social etiquette and an effective form of nonverbal communication.

**Henry Navarro Delgado**, an assistant professor of fashion at Ryerson University states, "The political dimension of clothing is intuitively understood from the moment individuals are born. Because essentially, human society equals dressed society." (Ryerson, 2018).

**Manish Keshikar**, director and chief creative officer at DSGN Fashions, says in his several years of observing the Indian fashion scene from up close, he has seen the lack of fashion education as a big hindrance. "Unfortunately, none of our institutes teach how to 'create' fashion forecasts, they only teach students to 'follow' forecasts. All our designers have also accepted the fact that design creativity in fashion is always the ownership of western designers. Indian designers must recreate their own forecasts instead of referring to international forecasts,"

Designer **Aniket Satam** says, "One cannot altogether ignore international forecasts and runway trends. I follow Pantone forecasts for prime colour selection along with Color Solutions International (CSI) colour report. For silhouette direction and style trends, Promostyl is fantastic while WGSN works best for print and pattern directions. In a globally connected scenario, everything clubs into an international mass trend with slight local adaptation. But India has diverse cultural, sociological structures, sedimentary economy and varied climatic conditions. So, to predict a homogenous forecast here is tedious.

### Rationale of Research:

The fundamental reason to conduct this study is to understand the problem being faced by designers because of singular pattern of research forecast. It is evident from the secondary research that the cultural forecast is not directed and designers are just making permutation and combination of existing forecast while trying to apply it in a regional/niche market. There is a need to forecast for a regional market to analyse cultures around, thus, helping small businesses as well as helping the existing local art and craft revive and grow and also, identify the new

cultures and their growing art. The research called for further discussion and citations with multidisciplinary dimension in order to spark of the competencies that are novel and can be applied to various market segments.

## 4.2 Phase 2: Discussion

To find the solution to our problem of cultural sustainability in fashion, leads to more in-depth knowledge of culture and it's aesthetics by finding reasonable citations and research to support the same, and how it can be further incorporated as a part of fashion forecasting for a new vision to the fashion industry.

The idea of looking at culture and aesthetics as the core for the ethic of sustainability can be traced to the works of the earlier philosophers of art, who justified the powerful role of art in society, and argued that values communicated through aesthetic experiences exceed the boundaries of art institution (Adorno, Adorno, Tiedemann, & Hullot-Kentor, 2004; Adorno & Bernstein, 2001; Collingwood, 1964; Wittgenstein, 1984). Moreover, art and fashion is a collaborative enterprise that involves the creator, performers, and spectators. Adorno emphasizes the repetitive character of the "culture industry" (the term developed with Max Horkheimer) and criticizes popular culture for producing standardized cultural goods, which lead to the standardization of the society (Adorno & Bernstein, 2001). Cultural Art in Fashion is capable of cultivating socially significant values - creativity, freedom, and human happiness. Based on Wittgenstein's philosophy, aesthetics is the expression of the ethical perspective on the world that is capable of putting current life events in the long-term perspective, and ethical values and ideas can be uniquely expressed and communicated through the works of art. In the contemporary scholarship, the actual significance of cultural values, arts, and creativity keep rising in importance alongside the socio-economic, science, and technology concerns (Haley, 2008), and it is the values and ideals embedded in the cultural dimension of sustainability that contribute to sustainable thinking in the longer-term. When adding culture to the dimensions of sustainability, one should be aware that culture itself is a very complex term, and there is a multitude of definitions associated with it. For instance, Williams identifies four contested definitions of culture: culture as a personal state of mind; culture as the process of developing cultured state of mind as part of socialization; culture as the arts or human intellectual works; and finally, culture as a way of life and a system of communicating, reproducing, exploring, and experiencing the social order (Williams, 1983).

The further is classified into two- firstly, to understand the core of the cultural dimension of sustainability to extract its competencies concerning fashion forecasting, second, the long-term significance of Aesthetics and Arts.

### 4.2.1 The Core of the Cultural Dimension of Sustainability

The following citations support the values and ideals embedded in strategic priorities of fashion forecast and promoted through their reports contribute to society and fashion industry and serve as the foundation of long-term institutional survival.

There are two main streams of discourse related to the relationship between sustainability and fashion: first, the issue of self-sustainability of fashion industry, and second, the role of fashion forecasters for the sustainability of communities and societies as a whole, identifying and exploring different forms of art. It should be noted though that both of these issues are not completely independent from one another. It is crucial for the fashion industry to be resilient and sustainable in the first place, to be able to serve as a catalyst of a broad, multidimensional idea of sustainability. Overall, the issue of sustainability of fashion industry implies both sustaining particular art through the pressures of socio-economic issues in the short-term, and addressing the question of long-term institutional survival and the legacy of art and their evolution across generations.

The recent survey conducted by the Centre demonstrates that race and ethnicity become an inescapable category for examining demographic change of the visitors' profile. However, with the incorporation of technology into the practices of art institutions, generational experience already seems more determinant than race and ethnicity. Audiences of art institutions continue to age, while younger people are more likely to prefer highly participatory forms of cultural engagement (Farrell & Medvedeva, 2010).

As the time of the industrial age passed, and the knowledge age arrived, there came a recognition that the future of arts depends upon both a deep understanding of their past and present and a comprehensive awareness of business practices (Falk & Sheppard, 2006). However, while shifting to new business models generally enhances the resilience capacity of cultural institutions, it also has potential negative long-term outcomes.

In an effort to address concerns regarding the future, are looking for the ways to know their public and serve it in a better way, thus building the base of current and future supporters. Cultural institutions employ a multitude of methods to improve the outreach and ensure the responsiveness to the public including the greater engagement in more popular, experimental forms of art, a greater dialogue with the public through social media, and arranging

multidisciplinary events that spark visitors' curiosity, where in fashion forecasters can also act as an important medium to support cultural institutions and their art. Increasingly, institutions emphasize their educational role and strive to serve as a learning environment for the public (Falk & Sheppard, 2006; Hooper-Greenhill, 1999; McCarthy, 2007; Paris, 2006; Suchy, 2006).

The study conducted in Kentucky demonstrated that depending on the type of personal value individuals place on art, to a different degree people might be reluctant to support the increase in art events and exhibits (Thompson, Berger, Blomquist, & Allen, 2002). However, regardless of the type of personal value they place on art, individuals are generally willing to provide support in order to avoid decreases in already existing performances and exhibits. This means that there is a certain threshold, or a base-line, below which the individual support for the arts is unlikely to fall. The main question is: what is the major factor that ensures the existence of such a base-line for the cultural art and its further involvement in fashion? This paper argues that the answer lies within the fashion and art sector itself and could be found in the uniqueness of the long-term role of fashion forecasters with respect to cultural art. The values promoted through cultural art to future generations build some sort of 'unseen' intrinsic endowment for the arts and designers, thus contributing to the resilience capital of fashion forecasters with different outlook on cultural art and ensuring their long-term endurance.

#### **4.2.2 The Long-Term Significance of Art for Future Generations**

There is an ongoing theoretic discussion regarding the importance of arts and culture for a more sustainable thinking. However, in practical terms this purpose of art is underused, and may be even not well understood and conceptualized by artists and their professional communities (Bachmann, 2008).

Even though cultural aspect of sustainability is perhaps least examined, understanding how culture can contribute to the long-term sustainability of communities and societies is key to a holistic understanding of sustainability itself. Further, on how fashion forecasters can play an important role in contributing to the long-term sustainability of communities and societies.

The issue of cultural sustainability is becoming especially urgent now, since many world societies are facing the crisis of identity and lacking clear vision of the future in the post-industrial age. Such a point of view is shared by several scholars of cultural sustainability (Brocchi, 2010; Haley, 2008; Kagan & Kirchberg; Nurse, 2008; Packalén, 2010). For instance, Brocchi argues that there is a natural link between a real democracy, cultural diversity and sustainability, since a culture of sustainability is able to address many important limits of sustainable development by treating such dogmas as "economic growth" and "free competition" with scepticism (Brocchi, 2010). Packalén also believes that current life styles and ideas regarding what a good life is can be re-evaluated with the help of an aesthetic content, serving as a counterweight to the technocratic tendencies in society (Packalén, 2010). The ideas regarding the role of culture for sustainability give a central importance to the creative human being, who is capable of bringing art into the dialogue about sustainable development. According to Nurse, the cultural industry serves as a catalyst for regional and national identity formation, a key driver of the new digital and intellectual property economy, and an economic sector with substantial growth potential (Nurse, 2008). In this regard, cultural goods are critical sustainable, and the promotion of cultural industries should become a transitional goal towards sustainable development.

The cultural sector is one of the fastest growing sectors of the world economy, which is explained by the rapid techno-economic change in products, distribution and marketing, the increasing commercialization of intellectual property, and the strong cross-promotional linkages with sectors like tourism (Nurse, 2008).

The turn to post-industrial economy signifies the shift in social values from traditional positivist orientation on permanent growth and quantifiable forms of production, to a more nuanced vision of what constitutes a good life. It is hard to underestimate the role of cultural industry in fostering these changes, especially in the long-term. The instrumental role of art is reflected in many local economic development initiatives and cross-disciplinary projects utilizing art to meet social revitalization goals (Cherbo, Stewart, & Wyszomirski, 2008; Currid, 2009; Florida, 2002; Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005; Markusen & Gadwa, 2010; Strom, 2002, 2003; Wilks-Heeg & North, 2004).

The multidimensional conceptualization of culture takes into account the multitude of culture's channels of impact and prioritizes different channels on the basis of the strength of their impact and importance on a macro level (Tubadji, 2010). It eventually became a platform for the studies of the culture-based development, which interprets culture as living culture and cultural heritage, both of which utilize culture as a resource for generating social well-being and economic welfare – the two components of sustainable development (Tubadji, 2010). The idea of culture-based development includes three conceptions of cultural intervention – culture as a framework, a tool, and a target of action. It recognizes the critical role of cultural transformation and presupposes that culture functions as an

institution with a dual role, it is capable of replacing natural resources as the primary raw material of economic growth, and it also shapes our beliefs and defines our value systems (Matarasso, 2001).

The role of art for social change outside of its own domain has been recognized, and become especially prominent during the late 20th century. It presupposes that social processes may occur through artistic processes that could potentially generate social change. Thus, an artist as an entrepreneur, who functions within the social convention, both benefits from some advantageous characteristics of art as a social process and has to put up with the conventional barriers of their own art world, as well as institutional and material barriers of the outside environment (Kagan & Kirchberg, 2010). By overcoming these barriers fashion forecasters can also foster the process of social change, therefore, art/fashion is inseparable from the society, and is the part of the same ecology.

Art as ecology emphasizes the importance of a synthesis of art and science, nature and culture. According to this line of thought, sustainability has the potential to find, through art, its immense scale and ethical value (Haley, 2008). By contributing to the reflexive thinking modes, artists and designers may become key change agents in sustainability (Dieleman, 2008). This approach to art allows expanding the problem of sustainability from mere question of sustaining fashion forecasters and artists to integrating art, as an equal partner, into the inter-disciplinary understanding of sustainability with technology predicting future trends.

In this regard art is valuable for sustainability as a strategy and a process of moving toward future, aimed at the creation of “an ecologically and socially just world within the means of nature without compromising future generations” (Kagan & Kirchberg, 2010, p. 15).

The intrinsic role of art is based on the assumption that it can be a source of personal and group values and principles. Within this line of thinking, sustainability within art relates to the processes by which art activities are carried out: search and research, learning and working, developing reflexivity of different types, appealing to a diversity of human qualities, and exceeding the limited types of rationality embedded in scientific discourses, common rules and routines (Kagan & Kirchberg). This new way of conceptualizing reality is system thinking, and it is based on a unique ensemble of values and ethical inquiry into the dilemmas of current and future world.

The intrinsic role of art recognizes that responsiveness to the public is not the only purpose of fashion. According to Hein, “fascination with things whose value is intrinsic, with anything that is an “end in itself,” although seems archaic in today’s world where nearly all activity is engaged to some purpose, is nevertheless very important because it promotes alternative modes of coherence” (Hein, 2006). The intrinsic role of art reflects the way of thinking that is favourable to the long-term sustainability. Bachmann claims that while science will help to get this transition done, art will help people to emotionally understand the ups and downs of this transition.

Finally, the ability of art to evoke thoughts of future is important for the purpose of intergenerational justice, which asks about the legacy of the current way of living towards future generations (Frederickson, 2010b). By being able to develop and promote timeless values, art created currently is naturally able to exceed the boundaries of current generations. Therefore, the value of art should never be reduced to perceiving art as an event, or entertainment, or a mere instrument for something else.

The process and practice of making art is valuable in itself because we can inform ourselves through it (Dewey, 1934). An illustration of the crucial importance of values promoted through aesthetics for future generations is the work of artists on climate change. Even before the effects of global warming became evident, artists and scientists worked together to create understanding of this problem, which is comparable with the role that culture played during the Industrial Revolution, the Age of Enlightenment, and the Renaissance (Haley, 2008). Thinking in the long-term requires the reconsideration of traditional moral values and developing a new culture of thinking that recognizes the complexity of the current and future world. Therefore, forecasting appears especially valuable for the long-term sustainability.

Based on the review of literature and theoretic arguments presented, it is possible to suggest two avenues. First, the values and ideals embedded in strategic priorities of fashion forecasters and promoted through their programs, contribute to building resilience capital, and serve as the foundation of long-term institutional survival. Therefore, ethics of long-term sustainability can be informed by studying and implying cultural art forming and its values that are being transferred to future generations through the balance of cultural art with other socio-economic and technological factors.

Second, by fulfilling their forecasting missions through both short and long-term strategies and acting ‘sustainably,’ forecasters and designers ensure endurance of cultural sustainability, thus vouching safe the interests of future generations by culture and its history passed on to generations. Consequently, understanding the resilience potential of fashion forecasters and designers becomes important for configuring the long-term impact of design aesthetics and values, also ensuring its role for future generations.

Both the avenues give different ways to look at multitudes of cultures, and fashion just doesn’t need to rely on popular culture leading to singularity and identity crisis. The first avenue, focuses more on studying newly

developing cultures based on values and circumstances of current situation and seeing its long-term sustainability in the industry. While the second avenue focuses more on the traditional cultures being followed for years, with their moral values and sustainability factor, but not given enough recognition which can be done through the help of promotional strategies with its different and new application or usage, to give a new outlook to the particular art or craft's future.

## 5. RESULT

It is important to know the influence of culture on fashion industry and to foresee cultural movements in order to comprehend the fashion environment. Fashion is not an isolated factor of clothing or accessories but it is connected to our life in every aspect and among them culture is the most significant. Fashion goes further than clothing and into the manner we desire to live our lives. Meaning, fashion influences our lifestyle. Fashion is influenced by cultural changes, such as modernization, art and even technological innovation.

There is an apparent interaction of shifts in consumer lifestyle, fashion and culture. It is essential to realize that fashion is made by people living in different cultures and different locations. If we want to understand fashion and its trend then it is necessary to understand what surround us in terms of the way we live. It is our society and culture which is our surrounding and they are the ones which influence our lifestyle. As per the discussion above, development of new fashion trends has mainly three sources in terms of culture, which can further help divide the forecast as per different cultures depending on the cultural influence, region, activity and other factors.

They are: High culture, low culture and pop culture.

1. Pop culture or popular culture, is a cultural segment, which is followed, appreciated and understood by a larger portion of the world audience. Usually it is highly influenced by movie or music celebrities. This type of culture is seen as a mercantile culture which is produced at a mass level for mass consumption. An example of how pop culture influences our lifestyle and our fashion can be seen by taking into account the most fashionable TV shows, like 'Sex and the City' and how everybody wanted to wear clothes like the central characters of the serial. With the progress of globalization, common trends of fashion are seen all around the globe (i.e. Levi's jeans). It is the most focused on culture by forecasters which is further followed by most retailers in industry.
2. High culture means elite activities like visual art, auditory art, and applied art like photography, design and architecture. In terms of influencing fashion inspiration, these sources bring new types of ideas and concepts to the designers. How art impacts fashion can be seen in the Louis Vuitton partnership with quite a few contemporary artists, like Takeshi Murakami or Stephen Sprouse, who had embellished Louis Vuitton Monogram bags in the past.
3. Low culture includes local street activities like graffiti or Hip Hop. The power of subculture to fashion can be seen clearly, skateboard culture from the 70s to present day. It can be difficult to distinguish certain styles as subcultures because they are quickly (predominantly clothing and music) adopted by mass culture. For example, the Japanese Harajuko girls, who are teenagers, originally from Tokyo's Harajuko district, who dress in a particular way. American singer Gwen Stefani named her 2005 world tour as well as her clothing line after these girls. In this way, a subculture or local culture has become a part of the global fashion and has been adopted by the global fashion market. Therefore, emphasising more on local cultures to understand local customers better and further being multicultural to spread it globally with different ideas.

As per the discussion above, pop/popular culture is most focused one by forecasters and fashion industry leading to identity crisis and singularity in trends, due to which innovation is lacking. While the high culture and low culture needs to be addressed by forecasters differently and with more attention to target and reach maximum customers, along with innovation in technologies and, also keeping the value sentiments of their cultural art.

This way the carbon copies of trend will minimise and will give more avenues to different trends as per region, and further leading to multicultural fashion, i.e., the rapid techno-economic change in products, distribution and marketing, increasing commercialization, and the strong cross-promotional linkages with sectors like tourism.

Adding to the same, the result is further supported and justified well with the help of the project in collaboration with GBL (Good Business Lab) and Shahi Exports Pvt. Ltd. It serves well as an example of Low Culture application in clothing. The following work is just an example of a craft in contemporary clothing, supporting both cultural sustainability and innovation, considering the wearable clothing as an important factor.

The following project is based on women working from home, generating employment to them as well as using waste fabric from manufacturing units and quilting it all together with a thread in a particular pattern, to form a beautiful fabric with the technique of **Kantha** (Traditional Indian craft).



**Fig -1:** Waste fabric to develop the quilted fabric



**Fig -2:** Female labour force hand quilting the fabric after adjoining the pieces



**Fig -3:** Hand quilted fabric with black thread (6ply)

Women's have to work from home, so it is feasible for those with the duties of house chores or the ones who live in villages and couldn't manage to work in factories to earn for their livelihood. Also, it is promoting an Indian craft by incorporating it in contemporary clothing.

It is sustainable and helping the society in many ways:

- Re-using the waste fabric
  - Generating employment to household women's
  - Promoting Indian craft- Kantha.
- Further, application of these fabrics has been presented in ready to wear clothing.



**Fig -4&5:** CONTRAST QUILTED-DENIM BOMBER JACKET

The denim jacket with contrast white quilted corduroy fabric with red anchor thread, inserted in multiple panels and balancing it overall after a denim wash. The jacket is great for casual wear (ready to wear) and will give a statement look, with denim on denim being in trend and quilted fabric making the jacket unique yet comfortable.





**Fig -6&7: MULTI-PATTERNED SHIRT**

This shirt is made entirely with the mix of three quilted fabrics- the beige checks, geometric print and chambray with polkas. These three fabrics are made out of waste fabric cuttings which makes this garment an example of best out of waste, also the ladies' hand quilting pattern being same is balancing the garment.



**Fig -8&9: MULTI-PATCHED DENIM SKIRT**

The denim skirt with multiple unique quilted fabric placement and an asymmetric cut at bottom hem with raw edges. Chambray with polka and regular geometric print quilted fabrics are used in a very well-balanced way with denim and, is further balanced by a denim wash.



**Fig -10&11: QUILTED FRAME**

The denim jacket is given a very subtle detail with quilted fabric patched pleasingly keeping the placement in mind with the raw edges. The patched quilt has been given frame like look by linear geometric embroidery at edges of patch in accordance with the thread colour of the quilt.



**Fig -12&13: FRISKY TARTANS**

The denim shirt is made interesting by patch work from two quilted tartans in red and blue by playing with their placement and raw edges detail at front yoke, collar, bottom hem, sleeve bottom and placket, and design place-mental patch work at back with the hint of contrast flat-lock detail.



**Fig -14&15: THE HONEYCOMB PATTERN WITH SKELETON AND ROSES**

The honeycomb pattern with roses and different forms of skeleton creatures over two different quilted fabric used with the solid fabric, playing with placement (front and back yoke) having raw edges, for a shirt. The colours of embroidery are in harmony with the solid fabric, therefore giving a soothing appeal to it.



**Fig -16&17: TARTAN QUILTED BOMBER JACKET**

This is a basic bomber jacket made out of tartan quilted fabric with a design metallic zipper at front and contrast rib around the neckline. It is great from Autumn/winter season as an outerwear. The colours of tartan fabric are best suited for the Fall(season).

The above project is an example of portraying a craft in a contemporary clothing, though the current emphasis remains on catering to the fast-fashion market, a bespoke approach that tailors' trends to meet client needs is potentially a much more viable long-term prospect that benefits not only trend forecasting but the fashion industry in general. Forecasters that can focus on offering guidance to ensure companies and designers navigate trends successfully, keeping in mind the details and diversity in trends with respect to different cultural activities around, while giving them the confidence to interpret them in their own way helps to enhance the USP of the company/designer. This not only gives brand a new way to compete in the marketplace, but also begins to reverse the carbon copy culture that is pervading fashion.

While there is room for both points of view at present that is a carbon copy culture or if forecasters can position themselves as an inspirational resource with the ability to create and innovate, trends and trend analysis with cultural sustainability will remain the future of fashion.

## 6. CONCLUSION

To cope with the ever-changing world, the marketing segmentation and targeting techniques are rapidly evolving from traditional, static, demographic-based criteria towards dynamic, mood, lifestyle, and psychographic influences. Fashion forecasting is the prediction of mood, behaviour, and buying habits of the consumer. It is no longer a question of identifying your customers by age, geography, or income, but looking into how and why they buy, based on their mood, beliefs, and the occasion.

But this new prediction method moving towards mood and behaviour is leading to the singularity in fashion trends. We can see, with trends evolving more globally, the traditional essence as per demographic-based criteria, of art and culture is dying instead of being improvised in a better way. Thus, leading to the end of the roots and creativity, and traditions of our history, which should be carried forward by evolving them, and incorporating them with the current ongoing scenarios and the technology.

*"The more we learn about culture the greater our understanding of the future of global consumerism in Fashion."*

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