

From Heritage to Hybrid: Generation Z's Approach to Traditional Attire

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ABSTRACT

The study explores Generation Z's perceptions, attitudes, and preferences toward traditional attire in the context of evolving cultural identity and contemporary fashion trends. With increasing globalization and digital media influence, traditional clothing is being reinterpreted by younger generations, leading to shifts in its cultural relevance and usage patterns. The research examines the relationship between traditional attire and factors such as cultural identity, emotional attachment, confidence, and social expression, while also identifying gender-based differences in preferences. The study adopts a quantitative research design and is based on primary data collected from 120 respondents belonging to Generation Z using a structured questionnaire. Statistical tools such as percentage analysis, chi-square test, Friedman ranking test, and factor analysis were employed for data analysis. The findings reveal that socio-economic variables such as education, occupation, family size, and number of earning members significantly influence attitudes toward traditional attire, whereas demographic factors like age, gender, and area do not show significant association. The Friedman ranking results indicate clear gender-based preference patterns, with female respondents showing a stronger inclination toward culturally rooted attire such as cotton and silk sarees, while male respondents prefer simpler and more functional traditional garments. Factor analysis identified four key dimensions: cultural identity and heritage, emotional attachment, confidence and social expression, and modern adaptability and comfort which together explain a substantial proportion of variance in attitudes. The study concludes that Generation Z does not reject traditional attire but selectively adopts and reinterprets it based on comfort, practicality, and modern aesthetic preferences, offering valuable insights for fashion designers, marketers, and cultural policymakers to promote traditional clothing in ways that align with contemporary youth expectations while preserving cultural authenticity.

Keywords: Generation Z, Traditional Attire, Cultural Identity, Hybrid Fashion, Fashion Preferences, Social Media Influence, Heritage Clothing.

INTRODUCTION

Generation Z, comprising individuals born between 1997 and 2012, is widely recognized as a digitally adept, progressive, and highly individualistic cohort (Smith, 2021). Their approach to traditional attire reflects a complex combination of cultural appreciation, adaptation, and, in some cases, resistance. While traditional clothing is often valued as a symbol of cultural identity and heritage, it is sometimes perceived as outdated or incompatible with modern lifestyles (Rahman & Singh, 2020). Social media, global fashion trends, and the growing emphasis on personal expression play a significant role in shaping how this generation perceives traditional attire (Lee & Park, 2022). Unlike previous generations, who adhered more strictly to cultural dress norms, Generation Z tends to reinterpret traditional clothing through a modern lens (Mukherjee, 2021). This has led to the emergence of hybrid fashion, where traditional elements are blended with contemporary styles to create innovative and personalized forms of expression.

Hybrid styling is often tried by them - ethnic style mixed with Western style or traditional style adjusted to the new preferences. An example can be the combination of the traditional clothes with modern shapes or the use of ethnic clothes with modern ones, which has become more widespread (Kaur and Sharma, 2020). This imaginative fusion allows them to remain in touch with the culture, at the same time they can be individualistic and trendy. Nevertheless, traditional clothes are pushed away by some representatives of Gen Z because of an idea of being uncomfortable, formal, or culturally inflexible (Hossain, 2021). Such clothes are usually identified with an older generation or used on certain special occasions such as festivals and weddings not as everyday clothes. As the youth are exposed to globalization and different styles of fashion, they start liking international or street style clothes more than heritage-based clothes (García, 2022). The hectic lifestyles of contemporary young people only contribute to a preference towards more convenient, casual and versatile clothes. In spite of these obstacles, a rise in the resurgence of Gen Z over the past few years has been well-timed by the increased cultural awareness and internet presence. Through digital channels, the influencers, designers, and content creators are keen in presenting new means of styling cultural clothing to make them more attractive to the young demographics (Ahmed & Noor, 2022). Such revival is frequently associated with pride and identity manifestations and an attempt to maintain cultural background in the face of excessive globalization (Chatterjee, 2023). In the end, the attitude of the Gen Z to the traditional clothing is predetermined by the balancing act between the cultural respect, individuality and impact of the fashion trends throughout the world. In general, generational Z has a strong cultural appreciation to less or non-engagement based on factors like peer influence, comfort, fashion trends, media representation, and cultural awareness (Fernandez and Gulati, 2021). The paper aims at exploring how Gen Z is handling traditional clothing in their daily lives, be it through adopting it, reworking it, or marginalizing it, and how this reflects on their future in terms of preserving and transforming cultural clothing in a contemporary and globalized society.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In their article, *A Systematic Review and Research Agenda of Body Image and Fashion Trends* **Kasturi J. Shetty and Suphala Kotian (2023)** adopted a systematic review in order to explore the connection between body image and fashion trends and to recommend future studies in this field. They have utilized secondary sources collection of qualitative data and used clear inclusion and exclusion criteria to select the relevant studies instead of primary data collection, which is why sample size is not relevant with them. The scholars relied on thematic analysis to provide a synthesis of the knowledge in the literature. Their review places an emphasis on the fact that fashion trends play an important role in shaping the perception of body image by the representatives of different demographic groups. They also pinpoint the critical voids, especially the necessity of additional studies on the role of digital media, social media influencers, and cultural diversity in the formation of body image and fashion-related attitudes.

In their article, *Green Perceived Value and Intention to Purchase Sustainable Apparel Among Gen Z: The Moderated mediation of attitudes*, **Nupur Arora and Parul Manchada (2022)** investigated the effect of green perceived value on the intention to purchase sustainable apparel among Gen Z and investigated the mediation of positive attitudes. With convenience sampling, they gathered quantitative data on 300 Gen Z respondents using structured questionnaires and selected the sample of urban and semi-urban population to identify consumers involved in sustainable fashion. The proposed relationships were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). The results indicate that green perceived value has a powerful impact on purchase intentions of sustainable apparel, and the effect is mediated by positive attitudes towards sustainable clothing. There are also moderating effects which are reflected in that the

values of materialism diminish the relationship whereas high consumer knowledge intensifies it.

El-Shihy, D. and Awaad, S. (2025), “Using Social Media to sustain Fashion: The impact of Brand and User-Generated Content on Purchase intentions of Gen Zs. The research question the study seeks to explore is the influence of brand-created and user-created social media content on the purchase intention of the Generation Z towards sustainable fashion. The study employed a purposive method in sampling the data of the Gen Z individuals who are active on social media. The type of data was quantitative collected via online questionnaires that were structured. The sample size contained an adequate sample of Gen Z consumers (information contained in the entire article). The sample consisted of individuals who visit such platforms as Tik Tok and Instagram and consume fashion content online. The researchers used partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) to test the hypothesis relationships. The results reveal that content created by the brand and user have a profound effect on Gen Z purchasing intentions of sustainable fashion, with the involvement and the presence of positive content leading to the above purchase intentions of sustainable fashion.

Masserini, L., Bini, M., and Difonzo, M. (2024), “Is Generation Z More Disposed than Generation y to Buy Sustainable Clothing?”. The research problem is to determine whether Generation Z can purchase sustainable and environmentally friendly clothing more than Generation Y with references to second-hand clothes and clothes made of organic or green materials. The authors gathered quantitative data with the help of the structured questionnaire and applied the propensity score matching (PSM) to minimize the biasing effects associated with non-random sampling. This is despite the not being the traditional sampling; matched groups of Gen Z and Gen Y participants were used to make a comparison in the analysis. The sample size and details are explained in the entire article. The sample design made comparisons between the purchase behaviours of these two generations by the survey responses. The researchers conclude that Gen Z has a higher propensity towards second-hand clothes compared to Gen Y, whereas Gen Y indicates a comparatively higher propensity towards clothes made of organic or eco-sustainable material, and the results reflect a subtle generation difference in sustainable clothing behaviour.

Shatabdi c.nannaware , (2023) the study on “Attitudes and perception gen z consumers toward dupe shopping” the study explore the attitudes and perception of gen z consumers towards purchasing dupe products. To analyze the factors influencing their preferences for shopping .the research was qualitative research using semi- structured interviews. The research use qualitative data type. The sample size was 25 active fashion buyers aged 18-25 years. The research sampling was used to select participate who are active consumers pf fashion products. The research tools semi structured interviews were conducted to gather in depth in sights. the research study revealed that generation Z consumers are drawn to dupe products due to affordability and accessibility.

Thi thuy an ,(2024) the study “Factors influencing gen z intensions to purchase sustainable clothing products” the objective of study to investing the factors influencing gen z purchase intentions towards clothing Vietnam. the research methodology was used factors analysis and structural modelling analyze the data The sample size was 641 Vietnam gen z consumers. the sample design was used quantitative approach using a likert scale questionnaire. The data type was quantitative. The data was collected through questionnaire. The study was concluded the suggesting that consumers with positive attitudes toward the purchase sustainable clothing.

Overall, the reviewed studies highlight that Generation Z's fashion preferences are influenced by factors such as sustainability, social media exposure, and personal values. However, most existing research focuses primarily on sustainable or Western fashion trends, with limited attention given to traditional attire as a multidimensional construct involving cultural identity, emotional attachment, and social expression. Furthermore, empirical studies employing factor

analysis to identify underlying dimensions of attitudes toward traditional clothing, particularly in the Indian context, remain limited. This gap justifies the need for the present study.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The rapid pace of globalization, the increasing influence of digital media, and evolving fashion trends have significantly transformed the clothing preferences of Generation Z. While traditional attire continues to symbolize cultural heritage, identity, and emotional attachment, its relevance among younger generations has become increasingly uncertain. Generation Z, being introduced to the world of different cultures and living in modernized conditions, can have a new relationship with traditional clothes, and it has an impact on their perception of cultural identity, personal confidence, and level of attachment. Regardless of the cultural significance of traditional attires, empirical studies on the effect of wearing the attire on cultural identity, self-confidence, and emotional attachment of Generation Zs are limited. Also, the differences in tastes concerning diversities of traditional clothes and the possible gender-based distinctions are under-researched. The need to understand these aspects is vital because the clothing choices in many cases can portray at a deeper level the social, psychological and cultural values.

The absence of systematic research on these relationships provides research gap on how traditional attires are perceived and desired by the Generation Z in the contemporary setting. Thus, the current research aims to examine the correlation between traditional dressing and cultural identity, confidence, and emotional attachment, explore preference trends related to the different traditional dresses, and compare gender-based variations in preferences among the members of Generation Z. Despite the few studies that have investigated fashion preferences and sustainability attitudes of the Generation Z, a lack of focus has been directed towards traditional attire as a multidimensional concept including cultural identity, sentiment attachment, confidence and social expression. The current literature is mostly concentrated on the sustainability or Western fashion tendencies, so the perception of traditional clothing and its reinterpretation in the context of modern youth culture is a gap in the knowledge process. In addition, empirical research that uses factor analysis to determine the latent facets that affect the attitude towards traditional clothing is limited especially in the Indian setting.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyze the relationship between wearing traditional attires and cultural identity, confidence, and emotional connection among Generation Z.
2. To study the preference pattern of different types of traditional attires among Generation Z
3. To compare gender-wise preference patterns in traditional attires among Generation Z.
4. To identify the underlying factors influencing Generation Z's attitudes toward traditional attires, with respect to cultural identity, confidence, emotional attachment, and social expression.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

To examine the relationship and differences in attitudes and preferences toward traditional attire among Generation Z, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H₀₁: There is no significant association between socio-demographic variables and attitudes toward traditional attire.

H₁₁: There is a significant association between socio-demographic variables and attitudes toward traditional attire.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in preference patterns of traditional attire among Generation Z.

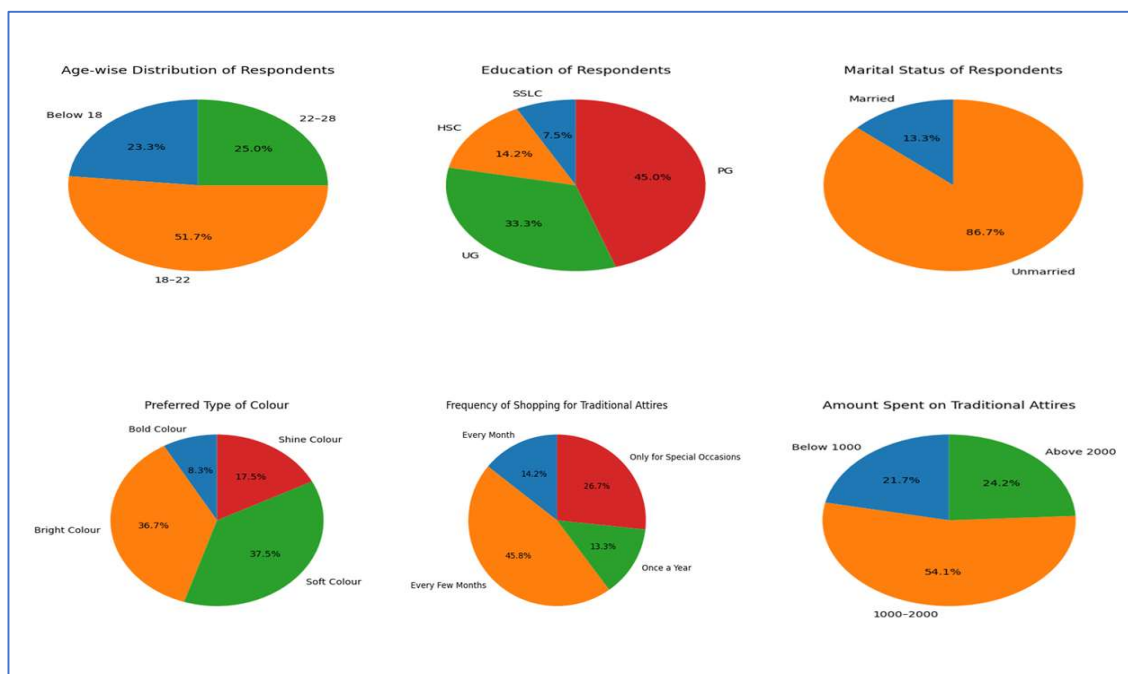
H₁₂: There is a significant difference in preference patterns of traditional attire among Generation Z.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a quantitative research design to examine the attitudes and preferences of Generation Z toward traditional attire. The study is based on primary data collected from respondents belonging to Generation Z. A convenience sampling technique was used to select the respondents for the study. The total sample size consists of 120 respondents. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising Likert-scale statements and preference based questions to capture respondents' attitudes, perceptions, and behavioural patterns toward traditional attire. The collected data were analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. Percentage analysis was used to study the demographic profile of the respondents. The chi-square test was applied to examine the association between socio-demographic variables and attitudes toward traditional attire. The Friedman ranking test was used to identify preference patterns among different types of traditional attire. Factor analysis was employed to determine the underlying dimensions influencing Generation Z's attitudes toward traditional clothing. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha, ensuring internal consistency of the scale.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The below pie charts are showing the demographic profile of the respondents



The following pie charts present the demographic profile of the respondents. It shows that a majority of the respondents (51.7%) belong to the age group of 18–22 years, followed by 25.0% in the age group of 22–28 years. Respondents below 18 years constitute 23.3% of the total sample. The pie chart shows that the majority of respondents (86.7%) are unmarried, while only 13.3% are married, indicating that most of the respondents belong to a young Generation Z group.

The chart reveals that 45.0% of the respondents are postgraduates, followed by 33.3% undergraduates. A smaller proportion of respondents have completed HSC (14.2%) and SSLC (7.5%). The chart indicates that soft colours (37.5%) and bright colours (36.7%) are the most

preferred among respondents. Shine colours (17.5%) and bold colours (8.3%) are less preferred.

The chart shows that most respondents shop for traditional attires every few months (45.8%), followed by shopping only for special occasions (26.7%). Fewer respondents shop every month (14.2%) or once a year (13.3%). The chart reveals that a majority of respondents (54.2%) spend between ₹1000–₹2000 on traditional attires, while 24.2% spend above ₹2000 and 21.7% spend below ₹1000.

Relationship between wearing traditional attires and cultural identity, confidence, and emotional connection among Generation Z

S. No	Socio-Demographic Variable	χ^2 Value	df	Table Value (5%)	Result	Decision on Ho
1	Area	4.043	2	5.991	Not Significant	Accepted
2	Age	5.877	4	9.488	Not Significant	Accepted
3	Gender	1.808	2	7.779	Not Significant	Accepted
4	Marital Status	1.318	2	5.991	Not Significant	Accepted
5	Education	18.594	6	12.592	Significant	Rejected
6	Occupation	20.285	6	12.592	Significant	Rejected
7	Type of Family	5.855	2	5.991	Not Significant	Accepted
8	Total Number of Family Members	13.557	6	12.592	Significant	Rejected
9	Earning Members in Family	24.515	6	12.592	Significant	Rejected

The consolidated chi-square analysis was carried out to examine the association between selected socio-demographic variables and the attitude and behaviour of Generation Z towards wearing traditional dress. The results indicate that certain background characteristics significantly influence respondents' perceptions and practices related to traditional attire, while others do not show a meaningful association.

The results have shown that the region of living has no significant correlation with attitude and behaviour of Generation Z. The respondents in town and village regions have the same attitude and behaviour towards putting on traditional dress, meaning that the geographical location does not greatly influence culture dressing behaviour among this generation. Equally, there is no statistically significant relationship between age and attitude as well as behaviour. This means that age differences among the Generation Z members do not have a significant influence on their perception and behaviour towards traditional dresses.

The analysis also reveals that gender does not play a major role in attitude and behaviour in wearing traditional dress. The respondent trends in both sexes resemble each other, and it means that the preference to traditional clothes is not gender-related among the members of generation Z. The same situation is found in marital status where no significant relationship is observed. Although married and unmarried people display a similar attitude and behavioural pattern, it can be argued that the status of marriage is not that decisive in influencing the preference of traditional dresses among young people. Though, education has a strong relationship with attitude and behaviour. This suggests that educational attainment affects the perceptions and participation of Generation Z in traditional dress, which may be because of the

differences in cultural exposure, awareness, and social setting with educational attainment. In the same way, occupation is also identified to be in a significant relationship with attitude and behaviour. The disparity in occupational status can influence the way of life, social relations, and involvement with culture, which subsequently impacts the desire to wear traditional clothes. There is no significant association between the attitude and behaviour and the type of family. The same is also evident among respondents of joint and nuclear families, indicating that family structure does not have a strong influence on traditional dressing behaviour in Generation Z. Conversely, the total family members are strongly related with the attitude and behaviour.

The size of the families might influence the culture as well as the transmission of values, thus having an influence on the traditional dress. Lastly, the attitude and behaviour are largely dependent on the number of earning members in the family. The influence of economic factors in the family can mean exposure, cost, and manner of lifestyle which may lead to traditional clothing. Comprehensively, the findings indicate that socio-economic variables including education, occupation, family size, and earning structure have a stronger impact on influencing the attitude and behaviour of Generation Z towards traditional dress rather than such demographic variables like age, gender, or location of residence.

On the whole, the findings imply that the attitude and behaviour of Generation Z to the traditional dress are more predetermined by socio-economic factors, including education, occupation, family size, and earning structure, rather than by simple demographic features, including age, gender, or location of residence.

Friedman Ranking of Preferred Traditional Attires among Generation Z

A. Generation Z – Girls (n = 92)

S. No	Traditional Attire	Mean Score	Friedman Rank
1	Cotton Saree	3.93	I
2	Silk Saree	3.61	II
3	Half Saree	3.59	III
4	Salwar	3.53	IV
5	Lehenga	3.36	V
6	Kurtis	2.97	VI

Within the group of female respondents, the findings show that there are some significant differences in the level of preference of various traditional attires. Generation Z girls preferred cotton saree most, then silk saree, and half sarees. Salwar and lehenga were given moderate preference and kurtis were the least popular listed traditional attires. This demonstrates that Generation Z girls are more inclined to use more traditional and culturally based clothes than contemporary traditional clothes.

B. Generation Z – Boys (n = 28)

S. No	Traditional Attire	Mean Score	Friedman Rank
1	Sherwani	2.96	I
2	Kurtha Pyjama	1.96	II
3	Dhoti	1.57	III

The analysis of male respondents indicates that sherwani ranks highest, followed by kurta pyjama and dhoti. This suggests that male respondents show a preference for more formal and occasion-based traditional attire. However, the relatively close ranking of kurta pyjama indicates that comfort and practicality also influence their choices.

Analysis of Underlying Factors Influencing Attitudes toward Traditional Attires among Generation Z

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.812
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	
Approx. Chi-Square	846.327
df	66
Sig.	0.000

The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) value of 0.812 indicates adequate sampling adequacy, while Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is statistically significant, confirming the suitability of the data for factor analysis.

Communalities

Variables	Initial	Extraction
Traditional attire reflects my cultural identity	1.000	0.791
Wearing traditional attire makes me feel confident	1.000	0.768
I feel emotionally connected to traditional clothing	1.000	0.823
Traditional attire gives me a sense of belonging	1.000	0.805
I wear traditional attire during cultural events	1.000	0.744
Traditional clothing represents family values	1.000	0.812
I feel proud wearing traditional attire	1.000	0.789
Traditional attire helps express my personality	1.000	0.756
Traditional attire suits modern lifestyles	1.000	0.702
Fusion of traditional and modern styles attracts me	1.000	0.734
Comfort influences my choice of traditional clothing	1.000	0.721
Social approval influences my traditional attire choice	1.000	0.698

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Total Variance Explained

Component	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.432	28.600	28.600
2	2.571	21.425	50.025
3	2.078	17.320	67.345
4	1.452	12.100	79.445
5	0.621	5.175	84.620
6	0.498	4.150	88.770

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

Rotated Component Matrix

Variables	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
Cultural pride through traditional attire	0.842			
Traditional attire reflects my heritage	0.819			
Sense of belonging through traditional dress	0.803			
Emotional comfort while wearing traditional attire		0.861		
Nostalgic feelings associated with traditional clothing		0.834		
Family influence on traditional attire usage		0.812		
Confidence boost when wearing traditional attire			0.846	

Helps express individuality			0.821	
Social recognition through traditional dress			0.798	
Comfort and ease of wearing				0.812
Preference for fusion styles				0.786
Suitability for modern lifestyle				0.754

Loadings below 0.50 are suppressed.

Naming of Factors

Factor	Factor Name
Factor I	Cultural Identity & Heritage
Factor II	Emotional Attachment
Factor III	Confidence & Social Expression
Factor IV	Modern Adaptability & Comfort

The factor analysis that was carried out to determine the underlying dimensions that shape the attitudes of Generation Z regarding traditional attire showed that there was a clear and significant factor structure. The value of KaiserMeyerOlkin 0.812 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity value is very large and makes the sample sufficient and the data met the requirement of the factor analysis. Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation showed that there are four factors whose eigenvalues exceeded one which in aggregate explained 79.45 per cent of the total variance. It implies that the factors extracted are enough to explain the important determinants that influence the perceptions and interest of Generation Z in traditional clothes. The former, which was referred to as Cultural Identity and Heritage was the most dominant dimension as it explained the greatest percentage of variance. The variables that load heavily on this factor describe feelings of cultural pride, representation of the heritage and a sense of belonging that is attributed to putting on the traditional attire. This is an indication that even being exposed to international fashion trends, Generation Z still perceives traditional fashion as something of significant cultural importance as well as social belonging.

The second variable, Emotional Attachment, focuses on the emotional attachment that the respondents possess towards traditional clothes. The emotional comfort, nostalgia, and family loading is also high, which implies that the traditional clothing is closely related with the personal memory, the cultural practices and the family customs. This emotional factor helps the continuation of traditional clothes even in those situations when they do not serve in the daily life, but only on some special occasions.

The third, and it is known as Confidence and Social Expression, is the issue of how the conventional clothes can assist an individual to improve personal self-esteem and express oneself. Respondents think that traditional clothes are one of the avenues that they can express their personality and identification by the society in particular, the cultural and social life. This observation brings out the aptitude of traditional clothes in a sense of indicating who they are and their social identity within the Generation Z.

The fourth reason is the Modern Adaptability and Comfort and it is about the utilitarian factors influencing the use of traditional clothes. The levels of comfort, fusion styling, and appropriateness to modern lifestyle are high which implies that Generation Z will select conventional clothes that suits modern needs and modern aesthetics. This is among the factors that support the use of traditional clothes occasionally and selectively which suggests that there is a need to be innovative and develop hybrid forms of clothes. Overall, the factor analysis indicates that the pattern of the appearance of the attitude of the Generation Z towards traditional clothes is multidimensional, whereas it depends on the identity with the cultural background, emotional attachment, confidence, and adaptability to modern trends. Instead of abandoning conventional attire, Generation Z interacts with it in a selective way, as a tribute to

the past and a meeting with comfort, uniqueness, and modernity. These results give a high amount of empirical evidence to the aim of the study as determining the underlying factors defining the attitude of Generation Z in regard to traditional attire.

DISCUSSION

The results of the research offer valuable information about the attitudes of the Generation Z and their interests in the traditional clothes considering the delicate equilibrium of cultural maturity and the real-life needs. The demographics profile shows that most of the respondents belong to the 18-22 group and most of them are single which means that the sample can be mainly considered as representing young adults in the process of identity construction. This goes in line with what Smith (2021) highlighted concerning the fact that Generation Z will be negotiating the cultural identity in early adulthood via lifestyle and fashion.

The level of education of respondents was quite high and the percentage of undergraduates and postgraduates was quite high. The elevated level of education is generally linked to a better sense of the culture and willing to reinterpret the traditions, which can be the reason behind the selective but significant involvement of traditional clothes seen in this research (Mukherjee, 2021). The tendency to use light and soft colours also indicates the tendency of the Gen Z generation to align its tastes with the elements of traditionalism and modern sensitivity, which Kaur and Sharma (2020) found in the trends of fusion fashion among Indian young people.

The frequency and spending behaviors of the shopping show that the traditional clothes are not an option that most of the respondents use every day but are rather used in special events. This confirms previous studies that Gen Z sees traditional clothing as an element of cultural events, rituals, and celebrations and not daily wear (Hossain, 2021; Rahman and Singh, 2020). The middle-level range of spending (1000-2000) also implies the value-oriented strategy, which is aligned with the tendency of the Generation Z members to prefer affordable and practical fashion (Fernandez and Gulati, 2021).

The Friedman ranking test as a gender-wise analysis shows that there are different preference trends. Cotton and silk sarees were the most preferred among the female respondents, which showed that there is a deep emotional attachment and cultural attachment to traditional old clothes. This taste is in contrast to the widely held belief that younger women prefer exclusively modernized ethnic clothes, e.g., kurtis, which hints at the re-emergence of the interest in culturally rooted clothes when they feature comfort and authenticity (Chatterjee, 2023). The decreased popularity of kurtis might be due to the saturation of the market or the feeling that they are the semi-traditional items but not the ones that have a symbolic meaning in the culture. The fact that several dhoti and kurth pyjamas are shown in preference to the sherwani among male respondents also shows that they tend to lean towards more basic and useful traditional clothing. Sherwanis can be seen as a formal attire, which can be viewed as constraining or occasion-related, which strengthens the argument that Gen Z prefers comfort and ease in even their clothing preferences (Hossain, 2021). These data are consistent with those provided by Mukherjee (2021), who found that younger customers are attracted to the traditional types of clothes that can be flexible and be customized.

In general, the findings show that Generation Z does not disapprove of traditional clothes per se but selectively uses them, being dependent on comfort, cultural appropriateness, peer pressure, and social media coverage. Online platforms contribute greatly to the transformation of the perception of conventional clothing by representing them through new and familiar forms (Lee and Park, 2022, Ahmed and Noor, 2022). This is indicative of a larger pattern of culture not being lost but rather redefined to suit the modern identities. This indicates that Generation Z is not abandoning traditional attire but is actively redefining it to align with modern values, comfort, and lifestyle preferences.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The current research has both theoretical and practical implications to youth fashion and cultural studies. In theory, it expands the previous studies by imagining conventional clothes as a complex phenomenon that can be affected by the cultural, emotional, psychological, and lifestyle-linked variables. Through the application of factor analysis, the research offers empirical support of the existence of these underlying dimensions, thus contributing to the academic insight into the interest of Generation Z in heritage clothing. In practice, the results can be of great interest to the designers of fashions, the marketer, and cultural organizations that want to advance the use of traditional clothes by younger people. The desire to be comfortable, blend hair styles, and use cultural icons can be utilized to determine new design patterns that would strike the right balance between tradition and modernism among the Generation Zs. The research is also valuable in preservation of the cultures as it emphasizes the fact that traditional clothes are still significant in modern youth identity development.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The research problem of the current paper is limited to the perception, preferences, and attitude of Generation Z towards traditional clothes, namely, the cultural identity, emotional loyalty, confidence, and contemporary versatility. This research paper concentrates on the respondents of Generation Z cohort and uses an empirical data gathered through the structured questionnaire, with the geographical scope that covers a specific region. The review is confined to the chosen examples of classic clothes and does not cover the modern fashion of the West and the casual wear. The research uses descriptive statistics, ranking procedures, association, and factor analysis to determine the dimension of underlying factors that may affect the attitudes toward traditional attire. Although the results offer valuable data to understand the multidimensionality of the factors that influence how Generation Z interacts with traditional clothes, the study is not conducted on the cross-cultural basis, on a long-term basis, and the exploration of fashion discourses. Thus, the findings are context-dependent and must be regarded through the scope of the data chosen and procedure applied.

CONCLUSION

The paper concludes that the attitude of the Generation Z to conventional clothes can be described as selective consumption, redefinition, and development of cultural awareness instead of immediate acceptance or dismissal. Although a majority of Gen Z people are no longer able to wear traditional clothes as a daily part of their lives, it still has a symbolic meaning, related to cultural belonging, emotional attachment, and belonging to a specific group. The results prove that the traditional wear is still up-to-date with Generation Z, especially when it meets the criteria of comfort, aesthetics, and personal expression. Gender disparities demonstrate that young women express more tendencies towards classical traditional clothes cotton and silk sarees, which means that the interest in culturally oriented clothes resurges. On the contrary, young men also like very basic traditional garments, such as dhoti and kurthi pajama, and this is because of the convenience and simplicity of use. The trends postulate that the conventional clothes are undergoing reform and not being out-competed and adapts to the practical and aesthetic demands of the youth in this decade. The effects of globalization, digital media and fashion trends in redefining the perception and wearing of conventional clothes are also identified in the research. Influencers and social media platforms will be a crucial part in reviving the cultural clothes through exemplifying them in the contemporary environment and, therefore, make them more appealing to the younger generations (Lee and Park, 2022; Ahmed and Noor, 2022). This kind of an online presence assists in establishing a novel cultural pride and identity and conserving a heritage amid the global fashion trends (Chatterjee, 2023). In conclusion, the contacts of Generation Z with the traditional clothing may be defined as the interactive process that takes into consideration the aspects of tradition and modernity. Their taste implies towards the manner of solemn, gradual,

and utilization related to comfort usage of usual garments rather than an absolute disengagement of the culture. The evolving dynamic has a strong impact on the designers, marketers, and cultural policymakers, whose need to change the traditional fashion to suit the values of the Gen Z and preserve the cultural authenticity is eminent. It is possible to conduct future research on the diversity in the region, sustainability and how the digital fashion culture affects the uptake of the traditional attires by the young people in the long term. This study has an important implication on fashion designers, marketers, and policymakers. The designers can use this information on the comfort and fusion inclination to create culturally-oriented but fashionable clothes that would appeal to the Generation Z consumers. The digital platform will enable the designers to brand the conservative clothing as fashionable, versatile, and convenient. Cultural institutions and policy-makers can also use these insights to promote heritage clothing among the youths through educational campaigns and online campaigns. The capability to bring classic clothes into the contemporary fashion values will ensure the stakeholders retain its relevance in the rapidly globalizing fashion world. The study highlights the need for innovative approaches to preserve traditional attire by aligning it with contemporary design, comfort, and consumer expectations.

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