Indian Designs in American Women's Fashion

— from 1960 to 1975 —

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미국여성복식에 나타난 인도디자인에 관한 연구, - 1960년부터 1975년까지 --

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Abstract

본 연구는 1960년부터 1975년까지 미국여성복식에 나타났던 인도디자인(Indian design)의 내용을 여러 사회계층으로 나누어 세부적으로 검토, 분석해 보고자 하였다. 지금까지 하위문화 선도이론(subcultural leadership theory)의 하나의 예로서, 미국복식에 나타났던 인도디자인이 반문화적현상(counterculral phenomenon)으로 청년복식에서 제일 먼저 채택되었으며 점차 사회전반의 복식에, 더 나아가 상류계층복식(high fashion)으로 확산되었다는 이론을 사회과학 분야에서 주로 사용되어왔던 수량적 연구방법인 내용분석법(content analysis)을 이용하여 실증적으로 분석하였다.

분석된 자료는 총 1043개, 22가지의 종류(subcategory)의 인도 디자인으로, 이러한 결과로 인도의 영향을 받은 디자인이 미국사회 전체의 여성복식에 폭 넓게 나타났으며, 그 절정 시기가 1967년에서 1971년 사이로 이시대의 사회문화의 특징이 복식의 형태에 잘 반영되고 있음이 밝혀졌다. 더불어, 각 인도디자인은 최초 출현시기, 절정시기, 지속기간, 디자인의 기원(origin)의 면에서 복잡하고 다양한 양상을 보이므로, 이 시대에 보여진 인도디자인을 채택하는 복식현상은 각 디자인 별로 (case-by-case), 여러 단기간으로 나누어서, 복합적인 패션전파이론(fashion diffusion theory)을 적용하여 설명하는 것이 바람직하다고 보았다.

Key Words: American women's fashion, Indian design, fashion diffusion theory, countercultural phenomenon, content analysis; 미국여성복식, 인도디자인, 패션전파이론, 반문화적 현상, 내용분석법

I. Introduction

Many costume historians noted the cultural movement of the sixties as reflected in clothing

styles. The youthful uprising of the sixties was strongly expressed through dress and it was used as an important agent to represent rejection of the values of mainstream culture (Russell, 1983). The adoption of Indian philosophy, religion and clothing

styles among youth in America between 1960 and 1975 has already been discussed as a countercultural phenomenon by earlier writers. Fashion theories were proposed to explain how new fashion styles, often observed among the young, appeared in the other segments of population. Researchers have used fashion theories established in different fields to explain the adoption and diffusion of new clothing styles through the social system. Using a variety of methods and sources, this study attempts to investigate the fashion diffusion process of Indian designs among different social levels-youth, mainstream and high culture, in women's fashion in the United States for the time period from 1960 to 1975. This study will also determine the possible influence of youth counterculture on high and mainstream fashion. The result of this determination will lead to the discussion of popular fashion theories to explain this fashion phenomenon.

In order to establish the distinction between different social levels and criteria for selecting primary sources, the terms, "high fashion," "mainstream fashion," and "youth fashion" were defined. "High fashion" refers to those styles accepted by a small group of recognized taste and authority(Anspach, 1967, p. 28; Klapp, 1969 p. 75; Rosencranz, 1972, p. 119; Troxell and Stone, 1981, p. 3). High fashion styles are generally introduced, produced, and sold in small quantities and at relatively high prices. "Mainstream fashion" refers to those styles accepted by majority of society. Mainstream fashion styles are produced and sold in large quantities at moderate to low prices. Within mainstream culture, young people in their late teens to early twenties can be treated as a separate subculture. "Youth fashion" refers to those styles accepted by the young people of high school or college age. Some styles used by youth suggest disassociation from mainstream society. In this study, the youth as a counterculture was treated since adopting Indian designs were explained as a

countercultural phenomenon.

II. Fashion Diffusion Theories

Four fashion diffusion theories dominate the field: the trickle-down theory, the mass-market theory, the trickle-up theory, and the collective selection theory. The trickle-down theory, also referred to as the upper-class leadership theory. proposes a downward flow of fashion diffusion from the upper socioeconomic class to the lower classes(Harrison, 1987, p. 13). According to Simmel (1904), social forms and the style of human expression are constantly transformed by fashion which affects only the upper class and then copied later by the lower classes. Veblen (1912) supported Simmel' s view explaining the use of fashion in the leisure class using the concept of conspicuous consumption and the counterfeit in dress by the lower class. Some researchers claimed that the trickle-down theory has never been adequately tested(King, 1969, p. 108; Field, 1970, pp. 45-52). Sproles (1979, pp. 126 -130)also suggested that, although this theory has long historical support, it has limited applicability to explain the fashion process in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Developments in mass production, marketing, and communication during this time made fashionable clothing available to nearly the entire population. This fashion process has been explained with a mass-market theory. The mass-market theory suggests the horizontal flow of fashion process, in which new styles are made available to all social classes at the same time by means of mass-marketing. In this theory, fashion leaders are not unique to the upper-class, rather, they exist in all social classes (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955). King (1963) proposed the first formal statement of this theory, in which he showed that fashion innovators exist in all social classes since the apparel manufacturing and retailing industry operates essentially

in the same way and on the same basic seasonal schedule in a wide range of price categories. In 1967, Grindereng found evidence to support this theory. This theory assumes that the mass—marketing system makes a new style available immediately in all prices and many manufacturers of fashion items produce clothing styles with similar ideas.

The trickle-up theory was suggested to explain the fashion process initiated from the subculture or the lower class and diffused into the mainstream culture or the upper class. This theory is often referred to as "the subcultural leadership theory" (Sproles, 1979), "upward-flow theory" (Troxell and Stone, 1981) or "bottom-up theory" (Behling, 1985). It was noted that many new fashions were initiated by subcultural groups such as youth or ethnic minorities in contemporary American society, especially in the 1960's and 1970's. Field (1970) proposed the trickle-up theory with a term, "the status float phenomenon", in which he explained the upward fashion diffusion from youth to mainstream culture, from Black culture to dominant White culture, and from the lower to the upper classes. Even though the process of subcultural leadership has been discussed by some researchers, empirical research on the mechanism of subcultural innovation and diffusion is non-existent (Sproles, 1981, p. 120).

Finally, the collective selection theory suggests that any individual from any social class can be a fashion initiator and that the middle class is usually the true carrier of fashion (Lang and Lang, 1965). Blumer (1969) explained this fashion mechanism as the composite behavior of fashion innovators with a collective taste, which was later accepted as socially appropriate to the spirit of times by the larger population.

III. Research Method

Both visual and linguistic elements found in the illustrations and advertisements that appeared in periodicals from 1960 to 1975 were used as primary sources. The primary sources on high and mainstream fashion were fashion magazines: Vogue for high fashion and Mademoiselle for mainstream fashion. The research data for youth fashion was taken from the former study reported by the author in the Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles(Kim, 1997), in order to compare the occurrence of Indian designs among different social levels. College newspapers published in the Washington, D.C. and San Francisco/ Berkeley area were selected because these areas were among the major cultural centers in the United States in the sixties and early seventies and because they are home to a considerable number of universities. All issues published from 1960 to 1975 from university newspapers and fashion magazines

The methods of content analysis and frequency seriation were combined to analyze the data obtained from the various primary sources. The content analysis instrument form was developed for systematic data gathering with predetermined categories and subcategories. The occurrence of each Indian design was counted and recorded on the form. Indian designs were categorized into three groups-clothes, accessories, and fabrics, and twenty two subcategories:

Clothes- (1)chadar; (2)chalwar; (3)chooridars; (4)dhoti; (5)kurta; (6)midriff top; (7)Nehru collar; (8)Rajah dress/tunic; (9)Indian shirt/blouse/smock/dress; (10)sari;

Accessories- (11)caste mark; (12)Indian cap; (13)Indian jewelry; (14)Indian sandal; (15)Indian scarf; (16)turban;

Fabrics- (17)Indian bedspread;

(18)Indian embroidery; (19)Indian print;

(20)madras; (21)sari cloth; (22)tie-dye.

Indian bedspread was included as costume objects because they were sometimes cut and sewn into clothes. Each subcategory was defined and described in terms of its origin and design characteristics in order to make an orderly recording of frequency for content analysis.

To determine the extent to which objects were imported from India, or made in the United States with Indian influence, each object was also classified into origin category: imported, attributed, and connotated. "Imported" items were those explicitly described as "imported from India." If the description explicitly stated that the object was "Indian" design or if it used an Indian costume term, it belonged to the category of "attributed" to India. The object belonged to the "connotated" category if the description only implied Indian influence but it clearly exhibited Indian design. Seriational analysis of the data were performed by ordering the frequency chronologically for the entire sixteen-year period. Frequency of occurrence for each design subcategory was plotted against a time line to produce a diffusion curve.

Seriations of designs for each social group were arranged in one plot to examine the sequence of development or evolution of each style. By comparing the diffusion curve of each style for different social levels, the extent to which each Indian design was diffused through the social system can be determined. This determination provided a basis for establishing the fashion diffusion model or models appropriate to explain the complex fashion phenomenon of the adoption of Indian designs in the Unite States for the particular time period, 1960–1975.

IV. Results and Discussion

The results were incorporated from the total 1,043 items classified by design and attribution categories over the 16-year period for different social class levels. Of the twenty-two different designs, nineteen designs were found in high fashion source, Vogue, sixteen designs in mainstream fashion source, Mademoiselle, and twelve designs in youth fashion source, college newspaper as shown in Table 1 and the seriation plots (Fig. 1 to 3), in which the frequency of each design at yearly time intervals were depicted for each social class.

Table 1. Designs Found in High, Mainstream, and Youth Fashion Sources.

Group	Designs	High F	Mainstream F.	Youth F.
1	Caste Mark	X		
1	Chadar	X		
1	Chalwar	X		
1	Chooridars	X	- {	ĺ
1	Dhoti	X		
1	Nehru Collar		X	
2	Indian Embroidery	X	X	X
2	Indian Jewelry	X	X	X
2	Indian Prints	X	X	X
2	Indian Sandals	X	X	X
2	Indian Scarves	X	X	X
2	Madras	X	. X	X
2	Midriff Top	X	X	X
2	Tie-Dye	, X.	X	X
2	Indian Shirt/*	X	X	X
3	Indian Cap	X	X	
3	Rajah Dress/Tunic	X	X	
3	Sari Cloth	X	X	
3	Turban	X	X	
3	Kurta		X	X
3	Indian bedspread		X	X
3	Sari	X		X

F: Fashion Source

Group 1: Designs unique to a single social class

Group 2: Designs common to all social classes

Group 3: Designs appeared in two social classes

*: Indian Shirt/Blouse/Smock/Dress

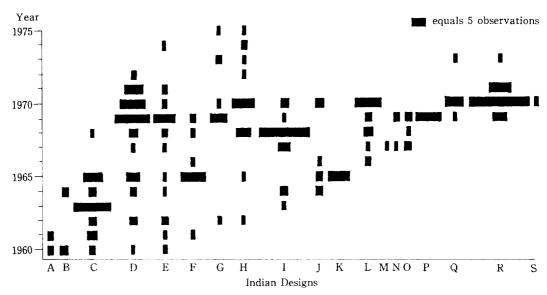


Fig. 1. Seriations of the Indian Designs in High Fashion Source.

A=Indian Sandal, B=Madras, C=Turban, D=Midriff Top, E=Sari Cloth, F=Rajah Dress/Tunic, G=Indian Scarf, H=Indian Print, I=Indian Jewelry, J=Chooridars, K=Chalwar, L=Indian Embroidery, M=Chadar, N=Sari, O=Dhoti, P=Caste Mark, Q=Indian Shirt/Blouse/Smock/Dress, R=Tie-dye, S=Indian Cap.



Fig. 2. Seriations of the Indian Designs in Mainstream Fashion Source.

A=Indian Sandal, B=Madras, C=Turban, D=Midriff Top, E=Sari Cloth, F=Rajah Dress/Tunic, G=Indian Scarf, H=Indian Print, I=Indian Jewelry, L=Indian Embroidery, Q=Indian Shirt/Blouse/Smock/Dress, R=Tie-dye, S=Indian Cap, T=Nehru Collar, U=Indian Bedspread, V=Kurta.

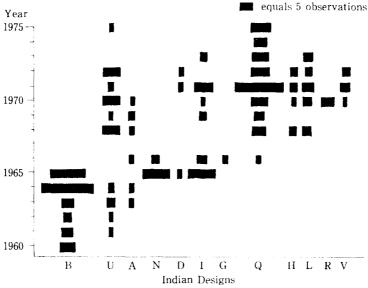


Fig. 3. Seriations of the Indian Designs in Youth Fashion Source.

A=Indian Sandal, B=Madras, D=Midriff Top, G=Indian Scarf, H=Indian Print, I=Indian Jewelry, L=Indian Embroidery, L=Indian Embroidery, M=Chadar, N=Sari, Q=Indian Shirt/Blouse/Smock/Dress, R=Tie-dye, U=Indian Bedspread, V=Kurta.

All designs studied first appeared in America between 1960 and 1971. The designs which appeared early (from 1960 to 1965) in the sources for all social levels included madras, midriff top, sari cloth, Indian scarf, and Indian jewelry. Indian embroidery, tie-dye, Indian cap, and kurta appeared late (from 1966 to 1971). No new Indian designs were introduced from 1972 to 1975. The examination of the time when each design first appeared among the sources of different social levels will indicate when Indian-influenced fashion was initiated and the extent to which it was diffused through the American social system in the media for the time period, 1960 to 1975.

1. Indian Designs

The twenty-two Indian designs can be classified into three groups in order to discuss their distinctive characteristics as shown in Table 1. The first group(Group 1) consisted of the designs which were unique to a single social class; the rest are

classed either as, the designs common to all social classes (Group 2), or the designs which appeared in any two social classes (Group 3). The designs unique to a single class (Group 1) included caste marks(P), chadar(M), chalwar(K), chooridars(J), and dhoti(O) in high fashion source and Nehru collar(T) in mainstream fashion source. The most variety in Indian designs was shown in high fashion source because of its tendency to feature unique designs. The Indian designs particular to a single social class stayed for a relatively short period. Chalwar(K) (1965), chadar(M) (1967), caste mark(P) (1969), and Nehru collar(T) (1969) appeared only for a year and these designs may be considered as fads. It was interesting to note that these fads emerged predominately in high fashion source. chooridars(J) and dhoti(O) were shown for a longer period, from 1964 to 1970 and from 1967 to 1969, respectively. In general, the frequency of the designs unique to a single social class was minimal and they usually appeared late in the sixties which

might reflect the popular interest in Indian culture in America.

The second group (Group 2) consisted of nine designs common to all social classes: Indian embroidery(L), jewelry(I), print(H), sandal(A), scarf (G), madras(B), midriff top(D), tie-dye(R), and Indian shirt/blouse/smock/dress(Q). As seen from this list, Indian influence was prevalent in women's fashion sources and college newspaper during the time period studied in many aspects of fashion, including clothes, fabrics, and accessories.

Although these nine designs were common to the sources from all social system, they appeared at different times throughout the time period. Indian jewelry(I), print(H), scarf(G), and midriff top(D) appeared for most of the entire time span. Where as Indian shirt/blouse/smock/dress(Q), embroidery(L), and tie-dye(R) appeared chiefly in the late sixties and early seventies, and may have been more directly related to the Indian-oriented youth countercultural behavior which emerged during the same period. The peak period of the designs common to the sources from all social classes was from 1968 to 1971. This suggests that even though some Indian designs already existed in the sources from all social classes during the early sixties, they became more frequent in the late sixties due to the potential influences from the youth counterculture' s interest in Indian culture.

The designs which appeared in the sources from two social classes (Group 3) included three different types: those found in high and mainstream fashion sources, those found in mainstream and youth fashion sources, those found in high and youth fashion sources. The designs found in high and mainstream fashion sources included the Indian cap (S), Rajah dress/tunic(F), sari cloth(E), and turban (C). There was a clear difference in the life span of these designs between mainstream and high fashion sources. Most of the high fashion designs appeared earlier and for a longer period than the same

designs in mainstream fashion. These designs in both mainstream and high fashion were predominately attributed or connotated to India, except one style, Indian cap, in which all items were imported from India in both mainstream and high fashion. These results may suggest the close relationship between these two social classes.

Only two designs were found in both mainstream and youth fashion sources- the kurta(V) and the Indian bedspread(U). The Indian bedspread in youth fashion source appeared from 1961 to the mid -seventies; the same design in mainstream fashion source appeared only in 1971. The kurta also appeared earlier in youth fashion than in mainstream fashion. From these findings, the suggestion can be made to explain the fashion process of these two distinctive designs, in which these designs flowed upward from the youth subculture to mainstream society. Finally, the only design found in both high and youth fashion source was the sari(N). As expected, there were some differences between the sari found in high and youth fashion sources in terms of first appearance and attribution. Saris in youth fashion source appeared earlier than in high fashion source and they were all imported from India, unlike in high fashion source, in which there were imported items as well as the ones made in the United States. This finding may demonstrate the possible upward fashion diffusion from the youth to high class.

In summary, Indian influences appeared in many aspects of clothing including clothes, fabrics, and accessories, in the sources from all social levels. The time and duration of the Indian influence differs in many ways among the sources from the different social system. The investigation of these differences and similarities in clothing behavior among the media from the different social system can explain the cultural implications of the Indian influences and the fashion diffusion processes particular to the period from 1960 to 1975.

The wide adoption of Indian-influenced styles in the media from all social levels generally in the late sixties supported the concept that fashion change can be explained in relation to the concurrent change in the social environment, even though the degree of Indian designs varied in the sources of different social levels. Adopting an unconventional design can result from a social disturbance which alters the lifestyle of individuals. This result is in agreement with Kroeber's (1952) observation, in which greater variability in female dress was noted during periods of social turmoil or confusion.

2. Attribution Category

The twenty-two individual designs vary considerably in terms of their attribution categories. All of the Indian bedspreads, caps, and kurtas were imported from India, regardless of the social levels. Most of the saris in high and youth fashion sources were also imported from India. The caste mark, chadar, chalwar, dhoti, Nehru collar, and Rajah dress/tunic in high and mainstream fashion sources and tie-dye in the sources from all social groups were all American-made and either attributed or connotated to India. Indian shirt-blouse/smock/ dress, embroidery, jewelry, prints, and madras were similar, in that more items in high fashion source attributed to India and more items in mainstream and youth fashion sources imported from India. Indian sandals in high fashion source and youth fashion source imported from India but those in mainstream fashion source were made in America and attributed their influence to India.

As shown in Table 2, there were apparent differences in attribution category between the sources from social systems. Most of high fashion items (96 percent) were either attributed or connotated to India and only a minimal number of items, imported from India. In contrast, most items of youth fashion, 90 percent, imported from India. The results of the Chi-square test showed that there is

a significant relationship ($\alpha = 0.005$) between attribution categories and social systems (Table 2). This can be accounted for mainly by the difference between attribution of high fashion items and youth fashion items. Definite differences were found among the designs of different social levels in terms of the degree of cultural authenticity and price range. The designs shown in high fashion were the most elaborate and highly priced, whereas the same designs shown in youth fashion were characterized by their low prices. In incorporating Indian designs into the contemporary American fashion, the degree of cultural authenticity varied between social systems. The designs found in high and mainstream fashion were transformed considerably and substantially in form and meaning, where as

Table 2. Recorded Frequencies and Percentages for each Attribution Category in Fashion Sources of all Social Systems

Fashion Source	Imported N (%)	Attributed N (%)	Connotated N (%)	
High F.	14(4)	170(52)	143(44)	327
Mainstream F.	222(46)	139(29)	117(25)	478
Youth F.	213(90)	15(-6)	10(4)	238
Total	449	324	270	1043

F: Fashion Source

Table 3. Leadership of Indian Designs

Indian Sandal (1960)		
Turban (1960)		
Rajah Dress/Tunic (1961)		
Indian Embroidery (1966)		
Indian Jewelry. (1961)		
Indian Cap (1969)		
Indian Bedspread (1961)		
Sari (1965)		
Indian Shirt/* (1966)		

^{*:}Indian Shirt/Blouse/Smock/Dress

 $X^2 = 412.18$ **

^{**}Significant at $\alpha = 0.005$

the simplest level of cultural authentication was perceived in the designs which were directly imported in youth fashion.

3. Leadership of Indian Design

Table 3 shows leadership of Indian design according to the year each design appeared in the source for each social level. The designs that were initiated in high fashion source included Indian sandal and embroidery, Rajah dress/tunic, and turban. Indian sandal and embroidery first appeared in high fashion source and then diffused to mainstream and youth fashion sources and Rajah dress/tunic and turban diffused only into mainstream fashion source. This pattern, in which designs spread from high fashion source to mainstream and/or youth fashion sources, reinforces the classic upper-class leadership theory or trickle-down theory which was popular in the early twentieth century.

Even though some authors have associated Indian designs or the use of orientalism found in America in the sixties with the youth subcultural movements (Roszak, 1969; O'Neill, 1971; Nunn, 1984), this study suggests that more Indian designs were initiated in high fashion. Though there were some controversial aspects of the trickle-down or upper-class leadership theory suggested by some researchers such as King (1963) and in explaining modern society's fashion process, the present study showed that this theory can explain the leadership the upper class held in adopting some Indian designs. The upper class was the first to adopt these new Indian designs which were later diffused into their social systems by social emulation. The mass-emulation of these designs in both mainstream and youth culture can be explained with the mass-market process of simultaneous diffusion through mass production and communications.

The trickle-down theory does not explain all of the diffusion patterns observed in this study, however. Youth fashion source initiated the adoption of the Indian bedspread, shirt/blouse/smock/dress, and sari. These styles were later shown in high and/or mainstream fashion source. This result supports the trickle-up theory suggested by Field (1970) and Blumberg (1974) in which many new styles in the twentieth century, especially in the sixties, were believed to have been initiated by anti-class youth or countercultures. The youth as a subculture became fashion leaders by being the first to adopt these specific Indian designs. Eventually, these designs were adopted by larger social groups.

There were a few designs which were initiated in mainstream fashion sources which appeared later in high and/or youth fashion sources. They were Indian jewelry in 1961 and Indian cap in 1969. This leadership by mainstream fashion supports the collective selection theory. Fashion can be a process of collective selection among a mass of people and therefore the fashion leadership is not confined to only the upper class. The mainstream people may be the true carrier of fashion since new fashions are readily available in modern society by a process of mass-marketing. The leadership in designs which appeared at the same time in both high and mainstream fashion source can also be explained with this collective selection theory. These designs include the Indian scarf, print, and tie-dye. Thus, it can be explained that the Indian jewelry, cap, scarf, print, and tie-dye were introduced to all consumers at the same time.

In summary, it can be said that the fashion diffusion process of Indian designs in the media from different social levels from 1960 to 1975 may be explained as a complex process of social emulation. Many different fashion diffusion theories can be applied at the same time to explain fashion trends initiated by innovative people existing in all social systems. Since the strong influence of the youth subculture increased in general in the United States for the time period from 1960 to 1975, fashion

leadership by youth was as prevalent as upper class leadership. The youth subculture, upper-class, and mainstream people contributed to the establishment of Indian-influenced fashion during the nineteen sixties and early seventies.

V. Conclusions

The results of the content analysis indicated that the wide appearance of Indian designs in American women's fashion in the sources from all social classes supported the idea that fashion change during this period accompanied a concurrent change in social environment. These new, unconventional designs reflected the social disturbance or confusion of the sixties which altered the lifestyles of individuals across many social strata.

The time of strong influence of youth counterculture in the media and its interest in Indian culture was concentrated in the United States during the time period between 1960 and 1975, with its peak around the late sixties. This corresponded to the time of maximum popularity of Indian influences observed in American fashion in general, from 1967 to 1971. Therefore, this study supports the belief that the American fashions found in the media of different social classes in the sixties reflected the contemporary social movements, often considered solely as a countercultural phenomenon.

The findings suggested that Indian influence on American fashion found in the media manifested itself in all social systems, however, with different meanings for different time periods from 1960 to 1975. The distinctive trends were observed generally in the two time periods: the first period was from 1960 to 1965, before the youth countercultural phenomenon in the sixties began, and the second one was the late sixties and early seventies, from 1966 to 1975. The introduction of designs unique to these two time periods may have been unrelated to each other. Even during the period of peak interest

in Indian design and culture in the late sixties, particularly from 1967 to 1971, the Indian designs found in the sources from each social group varied as to the time of introduction, origin of the garments, and the precise garments and accessories shown. Moreover, fashion leadership came from different groups, depending on the design.

The comparison of characteristic of the life span for each design between the sources from different social classes can facilitate inferences to fashion leadership theory. From the results of this comparison, it was noted that the Indian designs were initiated in the sources from all three social systems. These findings cast doubt on the hypothetical theories previously presented in the literature. Indeed, given the seriation of frequencies of different social classes, it was questionable whether the generalization of Indian influence as a whole can explain the fashion diffusion process in detail. Given such a consideration, regarding the complex character of the fashion process, various theories derived from different perspectives such as sociological, psychological, cultural, or mass-market models can be combined to explain one fashion process.

As a conclusion, the important accounts may be considered in interpreting the diffusion process of Indian designs found in the media through the social systems in America from 1960 to 1975: first, it should be explained on a case-by-case basis in terms of design. Second, the particular fashion theory should be applied to explain the fashion process for each time interval of the entire 16-year period divided according to its characteristics. Finally, it has to be noted that the nature of the modern fashion process considered as social emulation is a complex system, thus a combined fashion diffusion theory should be applied to explain the fashion trends initiated by innovative consumers existing in all social systems.

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