

G13 : FASHION : DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Unit 2 : Adoption of Fashion

Outline

- Fashion Terminology
- Fashion Cycle
- Classification of fashion consumers
- Theories of fashion adoption

Learning Outcomes

- Learning common fashion terms
- Understanding the five stages of the fashion cycle
- Learning the concepts on theories of fashion adoption and their influence on consumers

TERMS IN FASHION

- Fashion is a particular style that is popular at a given period of time
- Style is the basic outline of any garment. It is the modification of fashion. Fashion changes but style does not change. Eg. Box pleat skirt or Polo t-shirt
- Classic is a traditional style that stays for a very long time
- Fad is a fashion that is very popular only for a short time
- Change People get bored with what they have. They want something new, different and unique. This stimulates buying and makes fashion interesting
- Acceptance means that consumers buy and wear a style. Purchase- by a large number of people makes a style into fashion. The degree of acceptance also provides clues to fashion trends for coming season
- Collection a manufactures or designers group of garments for a specific season. The seasons total number of styles or designs accumulated for presentation comprises a collection

FASHION CYCLE

Fashion acceptance is usually described as a fashion cycle

- The five stages are
- 1. Introduction
- 2. Rise in popularity
- 3. Peak in popularity
- 4. Decline in popularity
- 5. Rejection

1. Introduction Stage of fashion life cycle

- The new garment is one of a kind with a cutting edge
- Introduced at major designer fashion shows (Avant Grand)
- Produced with creativity and custom made in small quantity

- New styles are high priced
- Limited acceptance by buyers, only fashion leaders buy them

2. Rise Stage of fashion life cycle

- Celebrities wear
- Sold in exclusive stores
- Expensive

3. Peak in Popularity stage of life cycle

- When fashion is at the height of popularity, there is more demand and adaptations at many price levels
- Due to mass acceptance the production reaches its peak
- Fashion is most popular and accepted, variety of fashion versions and at different prices
- Worn by most consumers
- Available at mall, departmental stores

4. Decline in popularity

- Fashion has oversaturated / flooded the market
- Decline in demand for the fashion product
- Fashion conscious people look for new styles and something new
- Retail stores put declining styles on rack with discount

5. Rejection stage of fashion life cycle

- Last phase of the fashion cycle
- Consumers no longer interested and worn by consumers to whom fashion is not essential
- Discarding the old style and beginning of a new style
- Prices come down

CONSUMER GROUPS

• Consumers as the Initiator of Change

Many consumers love expressing themselves through their clothing choices regardless of what the fashion industry is promoting at that moment. Considering the consumer as the initiator of change suggests that a group of consumers focus on specific fashion products which results in the development of specific fashion trends

Fashion Consumers can be classified into 2 groups

1) Fashion Change Agents - also known as fashion leaders, fashion mavens, fashion individualists, fashion trendsetters, or fashion early adopters; fashion followers are also known as fashion imitators, fashion opinion seekers, fashion late adopters, or fashion laggards. Fashion change agents promote transformation of fashion by buying and wearing new fashions shortly after a style's introduction (fashion innovators), by influencing others to purchase and wear newly introduced fashion styles (fashion opinion leaders), or by serving in both capacities (innovative communicators).

2) Fashion Followers (consumer groups)

Fashion followers include largest numbers or group of fashion consumers who accept and wear the merchandise that has been visually communicated to them. Fashion followers delay purchase until a style has peaked in acceptance.

ADOPTION OF FASHION

- The distribution of fashion has been described as a movement, a flow, or trickle from one element of society to another. The diffusion of influences from center to periphery may be conceived of in hierarchical or in horizontal terms
- **Theories of fashion adoption** or distribution are concerned with 2 how fashion moves through the various socio-economic levels of society
- There are 3 variations of the fashion adoption process
- **Traditional Adoption Reverse Adoption Mass Dissemination**

❖ Traditional Adoption-From elite to the masses

TRICKLE DOWN THEORY

American economist and sociologist, Thorstein Veblen, in 1889 first coined this theory in his book *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, the idea that fashion worn by the upper class were then imitated by the lower class

The trickle-down theory is a theory that claim that fashion change was the result of a need to maintain social stratification. At the time this theory was created, society had essentially two distinct social groups, the elite, which did not have to work for a living and the lower class, which had to work

Therefore, the social class which was able to afford new styles was the elite (the leisure class) and this led to quite a simple fashion change explanation: Fashion simply was diffused from the leisure class to the lower classes

Trickle Down Theory relies upon hierarchical society haute couture with “knock-off” designer labels being sold to lower class consumers. Fashion was adapted from trendsetting fashion centres like Paris, Milan, London, New York to other metro cities and places

❖ Mass Dissemination - Mass Market

TRICKLE ACROSS THEORY

Developed in 1950's, assumes that fashion moves across socio-economic levels. Mass communications and popular media supports providing pictures and details about new styles. Once a design appears on the runway, a variety of companies produce similar garments, allowing widespread access to fashion. Many designers show similar styles in a variety of lines, ranging from high-end designer clothing at affordable pieces. From the 1960's shift dress to the shoulder pads of the 1980's, these garments were available in discount, department and designer stores at approximately the same time

❖ Reverse Adoption - from street to couture

TRICKLE UP THEORY

According to the theory, styles may begin with youth or street fashion and move progressively up the fashion ladder until they are favoured and worn by older and wealthier consumers.

- Coco Chanel designer was the first to adopt this theory when she integrated military fabrics and attire into fashion following World War II. (khaki pants)
- T-shirt an undergarment worn by working classes adopted as casual outer garment
- hair styles
- Punk styles

In the 1970's the punk look was an anti-materialistic style created by the public, which spread in the fashion world like wild fire , designers like Vivienne Westwood and Jean Paul Gaultier were known to use Punk as their inspiration, still seen on the runways today, Punk is the original trickle up theory.