
Revisiting Fashion in Hairstyling via Bollywood

Kanika Sachdeva

Assistant Professor, Dev Samaj College for Women, Ferozpur City, Punjab, India.

Abstract

The film industry is playing a pivotal role in disseminating fashion through makeup, attire, ornaments and hairstyles. Some fashion trends become a stable part of the cultural reserve; others are short lived and display impulsive dynamics, called fads. New trends are set and this follows a fashion cycle. Through this century different hair styles ranging from fringes, bob cuts, classic waves, buns, perms, wigs have been in vogue at different times. Audiences always have an inherent craze to copy their role models 'on screen' and 'off screen'. This traditional process of copying and adapting to the 'Page 3 look' diffuses through the society and translates to road side glamour. Contrary but true, a large number of movies are inspired from day-to-day life, where directors watch people on the street to find ideas how their characters on screen should look. Thus, hair styles are a testimony to the trickle-up and trickle-down theory of fashion. Through this paper, evolution of trends in hair styling ranging from inception of Indian cinema in 1913 has been traced till date, further connecting it with advances in styling techniques, hair coloring and chemical hair procedures. Also an attempt has been made to trace the fashion cycle and fads in hair styling; using makeover of Bollywood actresses as an evidence of popular contemporary hairstyles in females.

KEYWORDS: *Hair styles, fashion cycle, fads, Bollywood*

Introduction

Ethnic, Cultural, Economic, Political and Personal role of Bollywood in the life of Indians: Here and Abroad

Media has the powers to alter spectator's viewpoint, action, or approach. Audience reliance on media is high in communities where the media fulfill information objectives and in chunks of hasty societal transformation or persistent public dispute.⁽⁵⁾ Youth exploit media as a "dialectical process" translated through daily actions and there is a strong connection between their self-perception and media choice, communication, and purpose.⁽³⁴⁾ Not only does media serve to disseminate diverse fads of attire, accessories, make-up and hair do's that are copied by people, but also social movements like 'Women Empowerment'.⁽²⁹⁾ Media involvement effects body contentment, and celebrity simulation influences self-confidence in preteen girls.⁽¹⁵⁾

Bollywood is an important part of media that has its influence worldwide. Indian movies appear in the highest rated movies of the UK and the US. The "hybrid" combo of east and west consequences in films accommodates the orthodox as well as modern-day mindset.

Bollywood, the Indian film leisure industry in Mumbai has been a part of economic case studies.⁽²²⁾ Huge cultural dissemination is being contributed by Bollywood. Indian movies have become an object of sale overseas today.⁽²⁷⁾ Given the thump of famous movies and

superstars on styles, patterns and beliefs of the audiences, Kripalini et al have explored how the advertizing industry uses movies as the most favorable intermediate for building brands through product placement and brand endorsement. ⁽¹⁸⁾

Bollywood films continue to advance. Today they play transnational and transcultural role worldwide. A study has examined the depiction of women with changing times in three selected films of Karan Johar within the scaffold of feminist theory. ⁽⁴⁾ Another study investigated the sway of Bollywood movies in the Indian diaspora's individuality construction, concept of home and travel pattern to India. Thus, Bollywood movies have huge significance in the Indian diaspora's identity building, encourage tourism and compose a vast prospect for financial growth. ⁽⁶⁾ Other studies expose that the non-elite audiences from rural India and low income groups find themselves ever more separated from the neo-globalizing images that Bollywood is shaping. ⁽²⁸⁾

On the other hand, it is repeatedly endorsed that exposure to media images depicting the lean-ideal body is associated with psychological body image concerns for women. ^(25,11) Other deprecating studies associated with Bollywood include tobacco use among adolescents in India through watching tobacco use in movies. ⁽³⁾

Stable fashions, fads and fashion cycle

The predisposition to titivate the body has remained consistent throughout history. While the contexts and practices of adornment change with time, conscious attempts to glorify the body have become ever more pervasive. Today, the use of medical technology like plastic surgery, tailored diets, workout, etc. to reshape body parts has become a tendency amid fashion icons. The boundry of fashion has impregnated a meticulous swing in aesthetic choices. Body amendment has evolved as a status symbol, and as means of marked expression to make a statement in the world of fashion. Thus, being passionate with fashions in beauty is redefining Indian beauty culture. ⁽¹⁹⁾ Fashion is not just trendy clothing, but also updated online status, weblogs and discussion lists. Fashion has emerged as a social signal using electronic media. ⁽²¹⁾

Fashion has been studied through various lenses ranging from psychological studies ⁽³²⁾, to mathematical models ^(1,23) and ethics involved in consumer behavior due to environmental concerns ⁽³⁰⁾ Kim et al have statistically analyzed male college students' responsiveness and behaviors to appearance management of hair, skin, cosmetic surgery, fashion and body shape; and expenditure incurred on the same. Results show that there is a significant relation between the two. ⁽¹⁶⁾

Fashion evolves through a sequence of distinct steps 1. Innovation, or creation of the idea, 2. Dissemination or diffusion of the idea, 3. Acceptance, or popularity of the idea 4. Disillusionment, or disappointment with the idea with time, and finally 5. Abandonment, or rejection of the idea. Management ideas, sales of rugs, mode of advertisements are themes which have so far been characterized by surges of fame and then refusal, thus following a fashion cycle ^(7, 35, 13)

Fashion emanates from many sources and diffuses in various ways to different publics. ^(9,17) Sproles et al have discussed some required hypothetical treatments, exploration and decision making applications of Fashion Cycle. ⁽²³⁾

Fashion forecasting is an upcoming profession that projects approaching trends. Prediction of the “colors, fabrics, textures, materials, prints, graphics, beauty/grooming, accessories, footwear, street style, and other styles” that will be accessible in the forthcoming seasons is done by such professionals.⁽¹²⁾ Such a forecast has scientific basis and is quite reliable.⁽¹⁰⁾

Hair styling

Different centuries have witnessed different hairstyling trends in Europe ranging from the pouf style in 18th century, shorter and easily manageable hairstyles during the First World War, curled hairstyles in 1950s, short modern cuts in 1960s followed by longer and looser hair in the 1970s. During the 1980s, individualized hairstyles were adopted. Hair coloring is now a huge business that involves the use of both plant-derived and artificial colors. ^(8, 24)

Studies have reported that hair color has implications in affecting judgment about a person’s proficiency and concept of beauty. ⁽²⁰⁾

Methodology

A dataset was first built for this purpose using still shots from movies projecting the female actor in lead role. A sample of 10 movies per year was randomly chosen, and one still shot was obtained from each movie. Hairstyling data of 104 years, a total of 1040 images, was collected. The most popular hairstyle of every year was extracted from images and graphically plotted year wise. The graphs were then analysed for any similarity with fashion curves, or fads. Further, a correlation was investigated with advances in styling techniques, haircoloring and chemical hair procedures.

Results And Discussion

1. The following major hair styles were identified from the data-set prepared for the purpose: buns, center partition with bounce, high buns at the crown area, loose hair with cuts of different length, front fringes and bob-cuts.
2. The trend of buns was prevalent since inception of the movies but gained vogue in 1928 and attained its peak in the year 1936-37, declined thereafter, and became obsolete in the year 1943 as shown in Fig.1. This trend is very similar to the Fashion Cycle. Similar studies by Ulrich et al have graphically shown inclining and declining trends, normal curve, fashion cycles, and classic fashions, along with significant correlation statistics in sales in case of tufted carpet. ⁽³⁵⁾ Similarly, Fay et al have tested the fashion hypothesis in mode of advertisements and found it valid.⁽¹³⁾

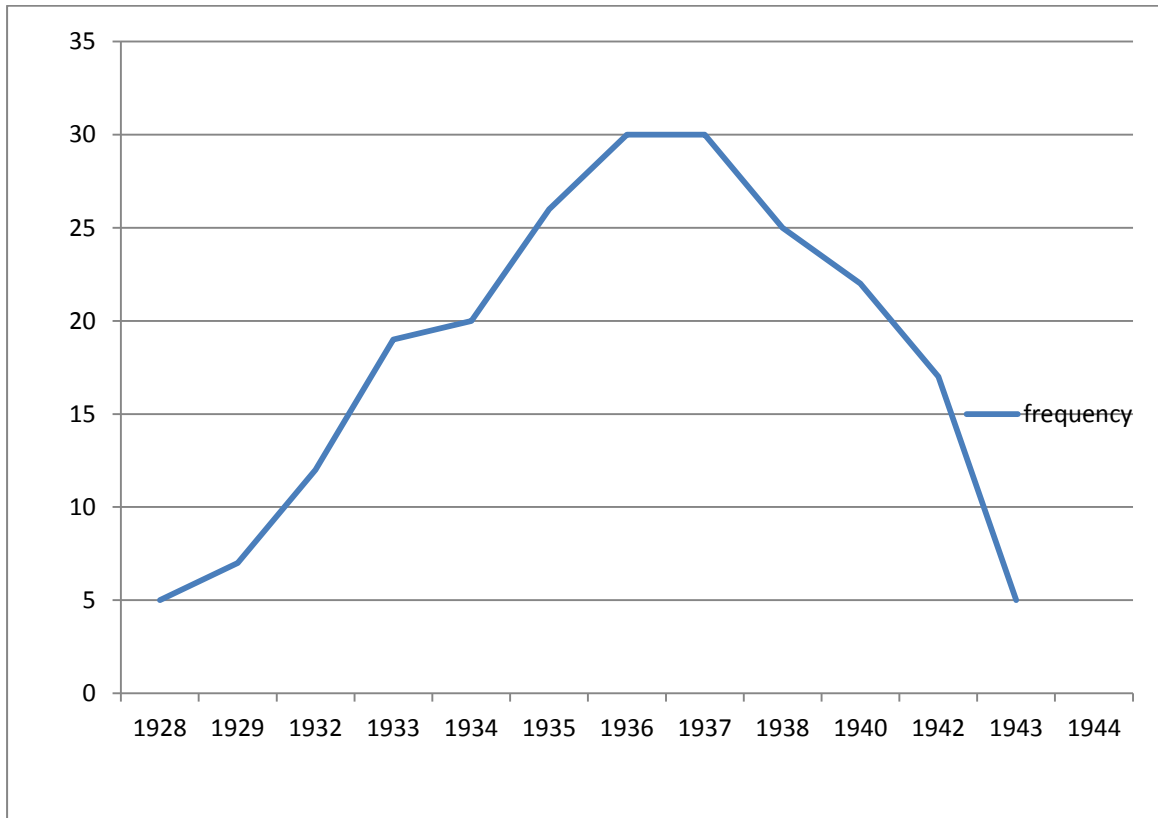


Fig 1: Year wise frequency distribution of buns.

3. The earlier trend was followed by onset of Thermal hairstyling in the industry and use of finger waves thereafter.
4. A new trend was set up with return of buns, but this time at the crown area, use of stuffing and large scale use of styling and fixing products like gels and mousses in 1963. Fig.2 shows that this new trendy hairstyle reached its peak in 1962, attained stability and tremendous popularity, started declining in 1968 and vanished altogether in 1974. Virtually all the movies of this era have beautifully showcased high buns on Asha Parekh, Sadhna, Hema Malini, Mumtaz and others. Thus, mid-sixties to mid-seventies was the decade of High Buns.

Again, this pattern is synonymous with the Fashion Cycle.

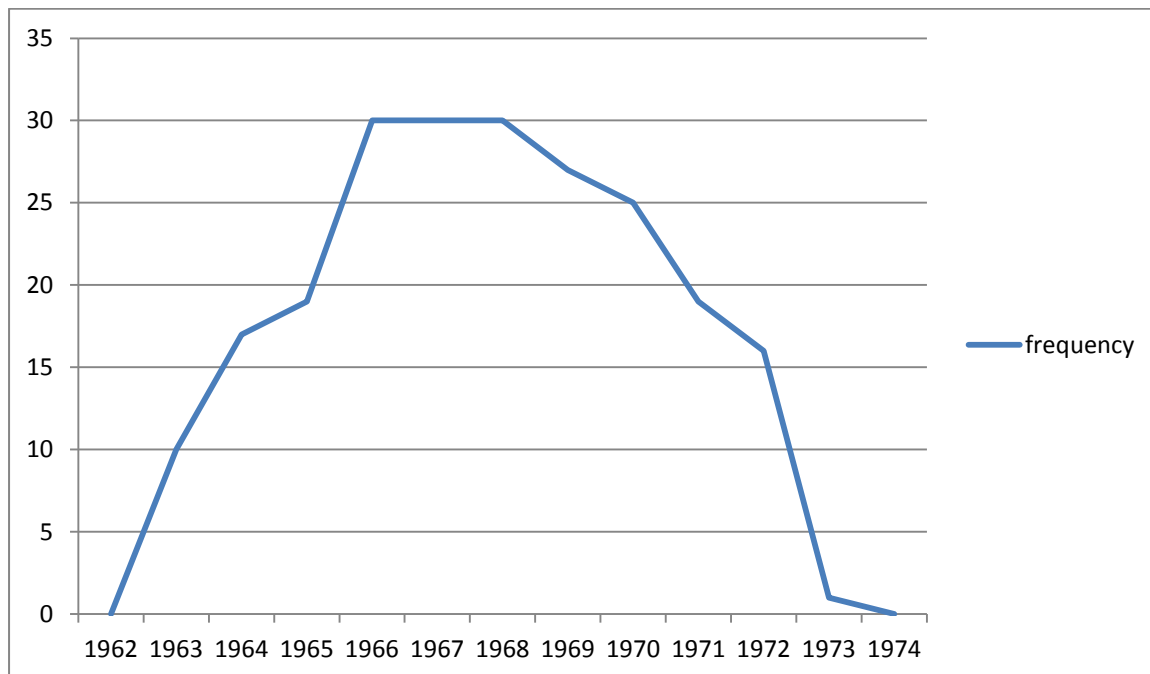


Fig 2: Year wise trend of High Buns.

5. Another notable and revolutionary style that took over parallel to the trend of High Buns was fringes at the forehead. This era of Forehead Fringes Initiated in 1961, reached peak in 1967, and eloped in 1972. This style was popularly quoted as the Sadhna Cut, named after the actress who brought fame to it. This hair style was designed by director RK Nayyar, whom she married later. ⁽³⁹⁾

The pattern of prevalence of Forehead fringes observed in Fig.3 here is again consistent with Fashion theory. This observation has implications consistent with observations from other researchers that fashion theory can be a comprehensive approach for understanding diffusion behavior of broad range of customer oriented, stylistic merchandise. ⁽¹⁷⁾

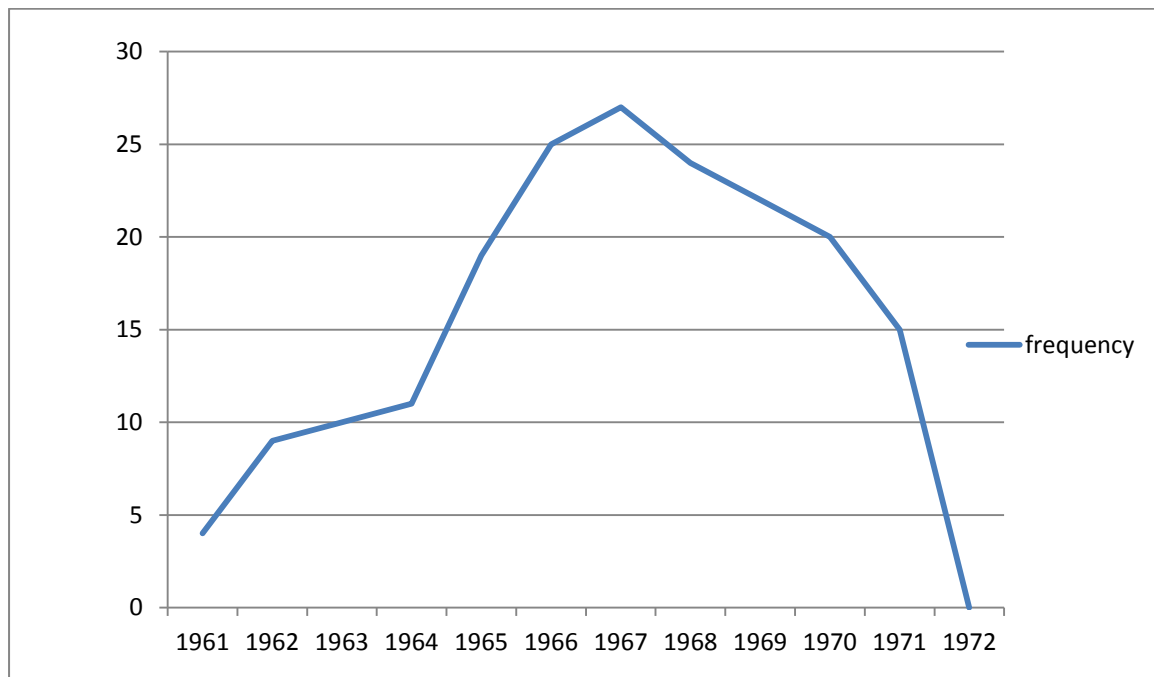


Fig 3: Year wise trend of Fringes/ Bangs

6. Hairstyles using blow dryers have been most prevalent after 1970s.
7. It is randomly quoted in literature that hair length follows a fashion cycle. However, statistical treatment fails to yield any such result. The data on hair length from 70 years plotted against timeline shows that hair length is a short lived fashion and the maximum stability attained with this fashion is 8 years so far (2000-2008) for medium hair length. Other peaks in the graph show occasional inclination towards extremes of hair length on both sides. Very short hair as in PK and Dangal were fads, and so were very long hair as in Bajirao Mastani in 2015 and Padmaavati in 2018.

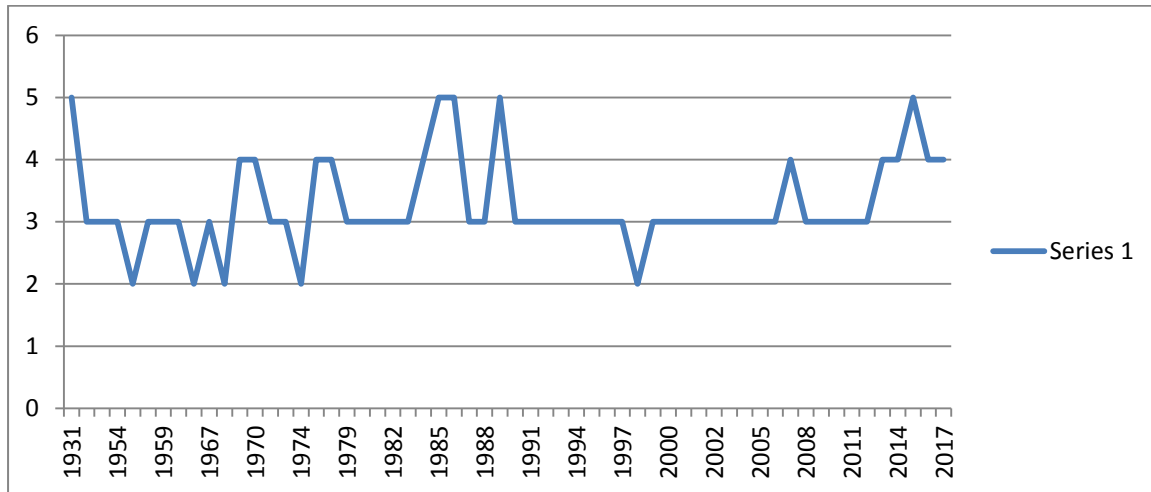


Fig4: Year wise trends in length of hair

PS: code1=very short

Code2=short

Code3=medium

Code4=long

Code5=very long

8. Fig.5 below shows that fingerwaves ⁽³⁶⁾ and curls have been an all time favourite among the stylists; but the intensity or tightness of the waves has varied and they fit well into the category of fads.

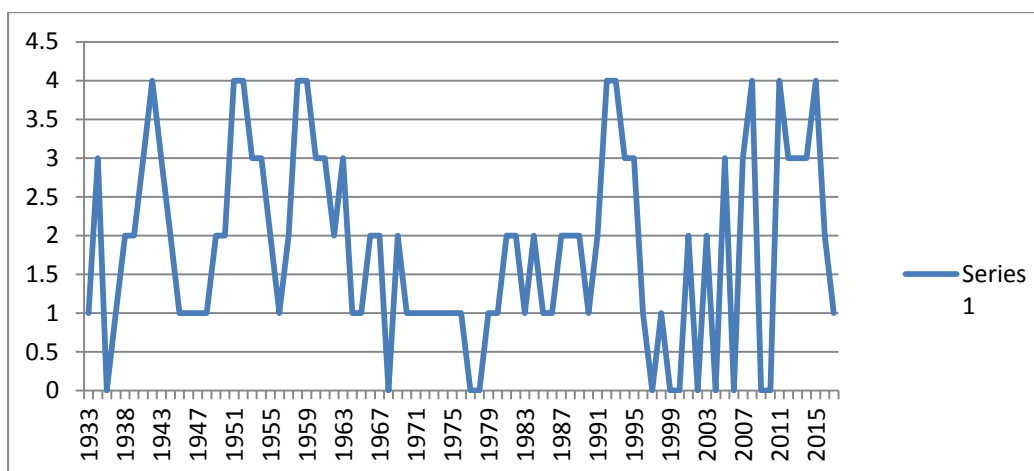


Fig5: Year wise trends in waves and curls

PS: Code 1: natural waves

Code2: soft waves

Code3: tight waves

Code4: curls and spirals

As can be seen from the graph, crimped hair was very popular in the 1980s to 1990s and is again in trend after 2010. This is in coherence with observations from other sources. 2016 fashion shows of Marc Jacobs, Prada, Jason Wu, Stella McCartney, and Salvatore Ferragamo emphasize and superimpose this observation.

9. Another short term trend observed is flat, straight and sleek hair at various times (wherever the graph touches zero in fig.5) Presently, this style is achieved by the use of hot iron and chemical relaxers was seen in mid-nineties ⁽³⁸⁾ typical of Karishma Kapoor in Raja Hindustani in 1996.
10. Fashion colors in hair started in late nineties and have become an ever increasing trend thereafter, with new colors and techniques being added year after year.

Conclusion

The trends of buns, high buns and forehead fringes are long term fashions that lasted for decades. Another trend of center partition is consistently present in the Indian cinema background for the past more than 100 years, is thus, long term. These clearly adhere to the Fashion Theory. Some short run hair styling fashions lasting months to few years are bob-cuts, waves and curls, very long hair and blunt-cuts.

In light of this research, fashion theory can be a comprehensive approach for understanding diffusion behavior of broad range of other stylistic consumerism.

Singhania et al have prepared a model using color reliant features of films owing to progressive camera and lighting techniques which recognises a movie segment into its tenure with fair precision. ⁽³¹⁾ The present work on classification of hairstyles can be used as value addition to increase the efficacy of such models.

Since Fashion theory is found to hold so well in hair styling, further work can be done on forecasting trends in hair industry, using principles presently available in apparels.

REFERENCES

- 1) Acerbi, Alberto, Stefano Ghirlanda, and Magnus Enquist. "The logic of fashion cycles." *PloS one* 7, no. 3 (2012): e32541.
- 2) Ajariwal, Aarti. *Trend forecasting: women empowerment (the upcoming trend on Indian hindi TV screen)*. NIFT-Mumbai, 2017.
- 3) Arora, Monika, Neha Mathur, Vinay K. Gupta, Gaurang P. Nazar, K. Srinath Reddy, and James D. Sargent. "Tobacco use in Bollywood movies, tobacco promotional activities and their association with tobacco use among Indian adolescents." *Tobacco Control* 21, no. 5 (2012): 482-487.
- 4) Ayob, Asma. "Beyond appearances: transnationalism and representation of women in Bollywood cinema." PhD diss., 2014.
- 5) Ball-Rokeach, Sandra J., and Melvin L. DeFleur. "A dependency model of mass-media effects." *Communication research* 3, no. 1 (1976): 3-21.
- 8) Bandyopadhyay, Ranjan. "Nostalgia, identity and tourism: Bollywood in the Indian diaspora." *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 6, no. 2 (2008): 79-100.

- 9) Clark, Timothy. "The fashion of management fashion: a surge too far?." *Organization* 11, no. 2 (2004): 297-306.
- 10) Clausen, Thomas, Annette Schwan-Jonczyk, Günther Lang, Werner Schuh, Klaus Dieter
- 11) Liebscher, Christian Springob, Michael Franzke et al. "Hair preparations." *Ullmann's*
- 12) *Encyclopedia of Industrial Chemistry* (2006).
- 13) Crane, Diana. "Diffusion models and fashion: a reassessment." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 566, no. 1 (1999): 13-24.
- 14) DI, Hongjing, Dongyun LIU, and Zhiming WU. "Forecast of women' s spring/summer fashion color based on BP neural networks [J]." *Journal of Textile research* 7 (2011): 023
- 15) Fardouly, Jasmine, Philippa C. Diedrichs, Lenny R. Vartanian, and Emma Halliwell. "Social comparisons on social media: The impact of Facebook on young women's body image concerns and mood." *Body Image* 13 (2015): 38-45.
- 16) "Fashion Forecasting & Trend Resources." UC Libraries | University of Cincinnati. Web. 10 Apr. 2011.
- 17) Fay, Michael. "Advertisements as cyclical fashion goods? An analysis of variation in the frequency of usage of values, claims & styles in magazine advertisements." *International Journal of Advertising* 18, no. 3 (1999): 377-404.
- 18) Grabe, Shelly, L. Monique Ward, and Janet Shibley Hyde. "The role of the media in body image concerns among women: a meta-analysis of experimental and correlational studies." *Psychological bulletin* 134, no. 3 (2008): 460.
- 19) Kim, Analia, Soo-Gyoung Lee, and Ae-Ran Koh. "Effects of media involvement, body satisfaction and self-esteem on the appearance management behavior of preteen boys and girls." *Journal of the Korean society of Clothing and Textiles* 30, no. 11 (2006): 1538-1549.
- 20) Kim, Young-Sook, and Jin-Yeong Park. "The analysis on appearance management of male college students: Focused on management of hair, skin, cosmetic surgery, fashion and body shape." *Korean Journal of Human Ecology* 18, no. 1 (2009): 259-273.
- 21) King, Charles W., and Lawrence J. Ring. "The dynamics of style and taste adoption and diffusion: contributions from fashion theory." *ACR North American Advances* (1980).
- 22) Kripalani, Coonor. "Trendsetting and product placement in Bollywood film: Consumerism through consumption." *New Cinemas: Journal of Contemporary Film* 4, no. 3 (2007): 197-215.
- 23) Kumar, Dolly. "Fashion and Beautification in India: Expression of Individuality."
- 24) Kyle, Diana J., and Heike IM Mahler. "The effects of hair color and cosmetic use on perceptions of a female's ability." *Psychology of women quarterly* 20, no. 3 (1996): 447-455.
- 25) Liu, Christine M., and Judith S. Donath. "Urbanhermes: social signaling with electronic fashion." In *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on Human Factors in computing systems*, pp. 885-888. ACM, 2006.
- 26) Lorenzen, Mark, and Ram Mudambi. "Clusters, connectivity and catch-up: Bollywood and Bangalore in the global economy." *Journal of Economic Geography* 13, no. 3 (2012): 501-534.
- 27) 23) Miller, Christopher M., Shelby H. McIntyre, and Murali K. Mantrala. "Toward formalizing
- 28) fashion theory." *Journal of Marketing Research* (1993): 142-157.
- 29) Morel, Olivier JX, and Robert M. Christie. "Current trends in the chemistry of permanent hair dyeing." *Chemical reviews* 111, no. 4 (2011): 2537-2561.
- 30) Perloff, Richard M. "Social media effects on young women's body image concerns: Theoretical perspectives and an agenda for research." *Sex Roles* 71, no. 11-12 (2014): 363-377.
- 31) Pointer, Sally. *The artifice of beauty: A history and practical guide to perfumes and cosmetics*. Stroud: Sutton, 2005.
- 32) Rajadhyaksha, Ashish. "The 'Bollywoodization' of the Indian cinema: cultural nationalism in a global arena." *Inter-Asia cultural studies* 4, no. 1 (2003): 25-39.
- 33) Rao, Shakuntala. "The globalization of Bollywood: An ethnography of non-elite audiences in India." *The Communication Review* 10, no. 1 (2007): 57-76.

-
- 34) Rich, Melissa K., and Thomas F. Cash. "The American image of beauty: Media representations of hair color for four decades." *Sex roles* 29, no. 1 (1993): 113-124.
- 35) Shen, Bin, Yulan Wang, Chris KY Lo, and Momoko Shum. "The impact of ethical fashion on consumer purchase behavior." *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal* 16, no. 2 (2012): 234-245
- 36) Singhania, Divyaa Ravichandran Surbhi. "Movies through the decades."
- 37) Solomon, Michael R. *Psychology of fashion*. Lexington Books, 1985.
- 38) Sproles, George B. "Analyzing fashion life cycles: principles and perspectives." *The Journal of Marketing* (1981): 116-124.
- 39) Steele, Jeanne R., and Jane D. Brown. "Adolescent room culture: Studying media in the context of everyday life." *Journal of youth and adolescence* 24, no. 5 (1995): 551-576.
- 40) Ulrich, Pamela V., and Seunghee Lee. "An application of fashion cycle methodology to change in residential floor coverings, 1950-2000." *Journal of the Textile Institute* 99, no. 1 (2008): 67-75.
- 41) **Websites**
- 42) Daniel, Sarah. "Charting the History of Finger Waves," January 5, 2017. <https://fashionmagazine.com/beauty/history-of-finger-waves/>
- 43) Doheny, Kathleen; Louise Chang (Reviewer). "How To Avoid Hair Damage from Blow Dryers, Flat Irons, and Curling Irons". WebMD. Retrieved 4 July 2016.
- 44) "Japanese Hair Straightening: Should You Try It?". About.com Style. Retrieved 2017-02-23. [m.timesofindia.com/entertainment/tamil/movies/did-you-know-TNN I Updated](http://m.timesofindia.com/entertainment/tamil/movies/did-you-know-TNN-I-Updated)
- 45) April 6, 2016, 12:04, IST