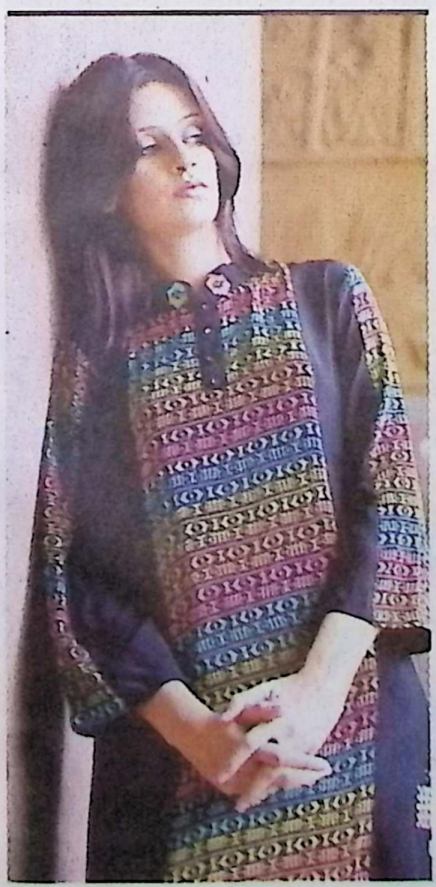
Do You Create Fashion Or Follow It?

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IT is true that young people are quick to follow anything around the world which appears 'hip' or 'in'. It is in their nature to want to be like opinion builders, like celebrities, who usually generate what we call 'trend' or 'fashion'. Youngsters are very quick to relate to and pick up anything they consider fashionable. By fashion, I mean to refer to areas such as sense of apparel, taste in music, language, hairstyles, beverages and even moral values.

Even in the most traditional of societies, it is impossible to control the barging in of rapidly changing fashion statements from other cultures, given that televisions, books and magazines form a strong two way media for cultures to interact. In other words, the world has practically 'shrunk', making it easy for fashion to weave its way through this closely knitted web of communication.

Like I have mentioned before, fashion among the youth, spreads like a wild forest fire. Let's consider that with a few examples. Taking into account, the World Cup Football that was hosted in Germany last year- every commercial break between the games, was blasted by the advertisement of the energy drink 'Gatorade', the consumption of which gave your favorite footballers the energy they required. Guess what is the next thing that is happening? The market is being flooded with supplies of 'Gatorade' because all football fans know that it is a must to have it, if they do not want to be left out of 'The Gatorade Fashion'. Going into more general examples, some youngsters might actually think, I am not a trendy person at all. This is mainly because I am currently not into the fashion of wearing 'Converse Shoes', I do not have rebonded hair, I do not use the word 'wicked' after every few words and so many others.

For most marketers, the easy way to invade a market is if your target segment is the youth and if you can convince them, your product or service is in fashion! This is because youngsters are usually more like rebels, because of their restless within. They want to assert their individuality and the values of their peers and usually tend to break away from the influence of generations before them, like parents and grandparents. Hence, they seek influences in groups having similar perceptions, to gain acceptance in terms of the way they want to carry themselves.

However, there is another segment of this same generation who pay little or no attention to trends set by others. Surprisingly enough, some people from this certain group do so because this particular 'trend' to not follow the general 'trend' is 'trendy' for them! For example, I know this particular girl from university who wears snickers with salwar-kameez! When asked about the reason behind this oddly unique sense of dress up, this is what I got, 'Basically, I prefer salwar-kameez to western while at the same time I'm more comfortable in snickers than flats or high heels. So I just blended both and look the way I want to look.' Nice, isn't it! She does have reasoning, but few to accept it normally. What she gets most of the times is stares filled with question-marks, not forgetting that was something I gave her when I first saw her! Oops!

There are also other kinds of fashion, which do fall into fashion statements, but few would dare to follow it. Like Marilyn Manson probably! Anybody dare to look like him and come to university? Nopes! But a less adventurous and more acceptable look is the Black-American Rapper look! Oversized T-shirts, falling baggies, side turned caps, immensely huge bling-blings... and what not to add to the completely D-12 or Snoop Dogg look.

Now that I come to think of it, it is actually pretty amusing to watch an assortment of such different fashion statements right in front of your eyes, everyday! It's like, you do not even have to switch through different fashion channels or flip through magazines to know what's in or what's out! It's right in front of your eyes! Eight to Nine thousand students are putting up a display for you everyday to let you choose what you want to adopt and what you don't. Trust me, that is one big advantage of being in university altogether. Had it not been for these fashion followers and fashion creators on campus, life would have been so boring between the long droning lectures and soul draining mid terms! So here's a thumbs up to you all for being the way you are! See you all again on Summer Semester.

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