

FROM PASSION TO PROFIT: NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES OF SCALING A
FASHION BUSINESS IN INDIA

by

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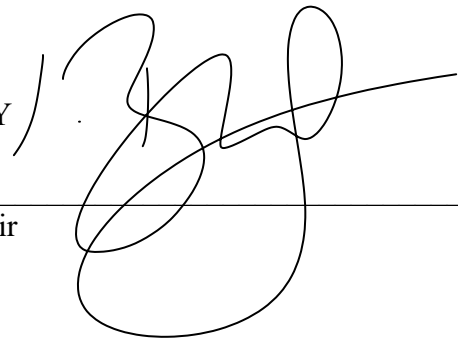
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Dedication

In Loving Memory of My Mom,

Whose enduring spirit, unwavering positivity, and boundless love continue to guide me every day. Your smile, your words of encouragement, and your belief in the best of humanity inspire me to strive for excellence and kindness in all aspects of life. Though you are no longer with us, your presence remains a cherished source of strength and inspiration.

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

Nelson Mandela

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ABSTRACT

FROM PASSION TO PROFIT: NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES OF SCALING A FASHION BUSINESS IN INDIA

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2024

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The Indian fashion industry blends traditional craftsmanship and modern innovation. It has established itself as a significant player in the global fashion scene. This study explores the current state of fashion entrepreneurship in India, highlighting the industry's challenges and opportunities.

The study examines the technological advancements that have revolutionized the industry, including e-commerce, 3D printing, and AI-based marketing strategies. While these innovations offer new opportunities for market expansion and customer engagement, they also introduce challenges regarding rapidly changing consumer expectations and the need for continuous adaptation. Sustainability is a critical theme within the industry. Indian fashion businesses must integrate sustainable practices throughout their supply chains in response to increasing global consciousness about environmental and ethical practices. This shift is necessary to meet consumer demand and ensure long-term sustainability and compliance with international standards.

Education also plays a significant role in shaping the future of fashion entrepreneurship. The study highlights the gaps in the current educational systems that fail to align with industry needs. It advocates for an updated curriculum with comprehensive training in digital skills, business management, and sustainable practices, which is crucial for nurturing a new generation of fashion entrepreneurs. The study also highlights the importance of supportive governmental policies and robust infrastructure to facilitate growth and innovation in the sector. Effective policy measures and a conducive business environment are essential for overcoming obstacles to finance, regulation, and international expansion.

In conclusion, the Indian fashion industry has significant potential for growth and global influence. To achieve this, a concerted effort must be made to leverage technological innovations, embrace sustainability, enhance educational offerings, and foster a supportive policy environment. This comprehensive analysis provides actionable insights for industry stakeholders to capitalize on the opportunities within this vibrant industry.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

India's fashion industry is a mix of traditional and modern styles. Its intricate craftsmanship, vibrant textiles, and innovative designs have made it a global fashion hub. From traditional attire to contemporary fashion, India offers various styles that captivate domestic and international markets. This rich heritage has made India's fashion industry a vibrant tapestry of diverse traditions and cultures that have been going on for centuries.

India's fashion industry has developed significantly over the past decades, blending traditional textile craftsmanship with modern design to create a diverse market. The sector includes design houses, garment manufacturers, retailers, and fashion entrepreneurs. Thanks to the emergence of renowned fashion designers, iconic fashion weeks, and burgeoning e-commerce platforms, India has become a well-known player in the global fashion stage.

Indian fashion caters to a broad spectrum of consumer preferences, blending traditional and contemporary styles. The market offers everything from handwoven silk sarees to fusion wear, reflecting India's rich cultural heritage and dynamic social landscape. Social media and the rise of homegrown fashion brands have revolutionized fashion consumption, empowering consumers to engage with and influence trends like never before.

Scaling a fashion business is essential for sustained growth and competitiveness in today's dynamic marketplace. As fashion entrepreneurs aspire to expand their ventures, they encounter many challenges unique to the Indian context. From navigating complex supply chains to capturing diverse consumer segments, scaling up presents both opportunities and obstacles for aspiring fashion enterprises. Understanding and

addressing these challenges is crucial for realizing the full potential of India's burgeoning fashion industry.

Scaling fashion businesses holds immense significance beyond just economic considerations. It catalyzes driving innovation, creating employment opportunities, and promoting socio-economic development. Fashion entrepreneurs who expand their reach and impact contribute significantly to the vitality of local communities, preserving traditional craftsmanship and highlighting India's cultural heritage on a global platform. Additionally, scaling up empowers fashion businesses to leverage economies of scale, invest in research and development, and adopt sustainable practices, promoting environmental stewardship and social responsibility.

1.1.1 Fashion Industry in India

The Indian fashion industry is an ever-evolving and dynamic ecosystem that has flourished for centuries, blending a rich cultural heritage with modern influences. India has been globally renowned for its exceptional textiles, exquisite craftsmanship, and diverse sartorial traditions that are as unique as its people. From the opulent silk sarees of Varanasi to Gujarat's vibrant hand-embroidered fabrics, the Indian fashion industry portrays a fascinating tapestry of regional aesthetics and cultural nuances.

India's fashion industry has experienced a remarkable transformation in recent years, driven by globalization, technological advancements, and evolving customer preferences. The emergence of world-renowned fashion designers, the establishment of fashion weeks across major cities like Mumbai and Delhi, and the advent of online retail platforms have firmly positioned India as a global fashion hub.

Furthermore, the Indian fashion industry encompasses many segments, including haute couture and luxury brands, mass-market apparel, and traditional ethnic wear. This diversity not only caters to the varied tastes and preferences of Indian consumers but also

attracts international attention, making India a melting pot of fashion influences and inspirations.

The Indian fashion industry, while unique in its blend of traditional and contemporary styles, demonstrates trends, consumer behavior, and industry dynamics that align with and differ from global markets. Here is a synthesis of the findings from relevant studies:

Trends and Consumer Behavior: Thanks to the sharing economy concept, luxury fashion rental consumption has become increasingly popular among Indian millennials. Various factors influence this trend, including economic benefits, fashion involvement, and social projection. Interestingly, social projection is the most significant predictor of this trend, according to research by Jain and Mishra (2020). It is worth noting that Indian consumers are becoming more aware of global fashion trends and consumer patterns, particularly in the footwear industry, as observed by Pooranam and Nandhini (2019).

Industry Dynamics: The Indian apparel industry has experienced remarkable progress, propelled by the diversification of its product range, the adoption of cutting-edge technology, and the exploration of fresh business opportunities. This growth is a testament to India's significant position in the worldwide fashion market (Kumar and Raju, 2018). In the Indian fashion market, gender dynamics are essential. Variations in purchasing behavior and brand choices among young consumers based on gender accentuate the significance of tailored marketing tactics (Rajput and Khanna, 2014).

Comparison with Global Markets: The Indian market presents distinctive features in its fashion industry despite sharing similarities with trends like the rise of the sharing economy and eco-friendly fashion. This includes a significant influence from traditional clothing, the integration of local and global fashion trends, and diverse consumer demographics driven by a vast middle class. India's fashion industry's ability to swiftly

embrace global trends while preserving its traditional roots endows it with a remarkable standing in the global fashion scene.

The Indian fashion industry is a fascinating blend of traditional and modern elements, catering to global consumers while retaining its unique cultural identity. Focusing on projecting social status characterizes the country's fashion landscape, a heightened sense of fashion awareness, and a rapidly expanding apparel sector, all of which have contributed to India's growing prominence in the global fashion market.

Globalization has significantly influenced the Indian fashion industry, particularly in sourcing, production, and market penetration.

Globalization has significantly impacted the Indian textile industry, leading to increased demand for different fabrics, fashionable clothing, and technological advancements while promoting the development of eco-friendly apparel. Additionally, globalization has improved economic conditions for workers in the industry and facilitated the automation of production processes, enabling it to compete effectively on a global scale (Agarwal, 2017). The Indian handicrafts sector is a prime example of how Indian culture and tradition have become integral parts of the global fashion industry. While this has created new opportunities, there are concerns about maintaining local uniqueness amidst mass production and global competition (Jena, 2010).

Foreign investment in India's economy has increased due to liberalization, which has led to the establishment of multinational corporations and the growth of service and manufacturing sectors. This has improved technology, skills, and governance, making India a hub of efficient labor and an attractive market for global players (Das, 2016). However, globalization presents challenges for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), including increased competition and demand that affect India's major

economies. India's MSMEs have seen decreased export competitiveness and urgently need intervention to improve their status. (Singh and Khatri, 2020).

The decentralized sector of Indian handicrafts has tapped into new opportunities in the global market by catering to local and international demands. The sector's export growth highlights the immense potential of Indian handicrafts on the international stage, though it is imperative to maintain the unique qualities of locally-made products (Vats, 2014). Meanwhile, the Indian fashion industry has experienced a revolution due to the focus on the digital economy and technological advancements. With the rise in internet usage and the growth of e-commerce, Indian fashion brands have achieved cost-effective marketing and improved supply chains, allowing them to better cater to consumer preferences and break into global markets more effectively (Duggal, 2023).

Globalization has dramatically impacted the Indian fashion industry, both positively and negatively. On the one hand, it has opened up doors to global markets, attracted foreign investments, and brought new technological advancements that have helped the industry grow. On the other hand, it has presented the challenge of preserving the distinctive cultural heritage of Indian fashion while competing in the global market. The industry is faced with the task of striking a balance between embracing globalization and retaining its unique identity.

1.1.2 Unique Characteristics of the Indian Fashion Market

The Indian fashion market has a unique identity sets it apart from its global counterparts. One of the most notable features is the seamless blending of traditional craftsmanship with contemporary design sensibilities. Indian designers have a knack for infusing age-old textile techniques, embellishments, and motifs with modern aesthetics to create unique and innovative collections that have garnered worldwide acclaim.

Another defining characteristic of the Indian fashion market is its cultural diversity and regional specificity. Each region of India boasts a distinct textile tradition, weaving technique, and embroidery style, contributing to the richness and diversity of Indian fashion. The country's cultural heritage and artisanal craftsmanship are celebrated and showcased through various fashion events, exhibitions, and collaborations, highlighting the country's diversity and cultural richness.

Moreover, the Indian fashion market is known for its affordability and accessibility, catering to consumers across different socio-economic backgrounds. From high-end luxury boutiques to street markets and online platforms, Indian fashion offers various choices at varying prices, making it an inclusive and accessible industry for a diverse consumer base. This affordability and accessibility have made Indian fashion attractive for those looking for quality and stylish fashion at reasonable prices.

The Indian fashion market is set apart from other global fashion markets due to its rich tapestry of cultural heritage, diverse traditions, and vibrant aesthetics. One of its unique features is the combination of traditional craftsmanship with contemporary design sensibilities. This results in fashion offerings that reflect India's diverse cultural landscape and blend old-world charm with modern innovation, from textile choices and embellishments to silhouette designs and color palettes.

The Indian fashion market is characterized by a vast array of regional styles and ethnic influences, each contributing to the overall diversity and vibrancy of the industry. Indian fashion draws inspiration from various cultural traditions, reflecting the country's rich and diverse heritage. This includes the intricately woven silk sarees of South India, the vibrant embroidery of Gujarat, and the ornate embellishments of Rajasthan.

The Indian fashion market is known for its inclusivity and accessibility, catering to consumers from different socio-economic backgrounds and ages. Traditional attire

coexists harmoniously with contemporary fashion trends, offering various choices at varying prices. This inclusivity fosters greater consumer engagement and contributes to the democratization of fashion, allowing individuals from all walks of life to express their unique style.

The Indian fashion market is deeply intertwined with the country's social and religious fabric, with fashion trends often influenced by seasonal festivals, cultural celebrations, and religious ceremonies. This dynamic interplay between fashion and culture adds depth and significance to Indian fashion, making it more than just a commercial enterprise but a reflection of society's values, beliefs, and aspirations.

Overall, the Indian fashion market's distinctive features contribute to its diversity and vibrancy, making it a dynamic and captivating industry that continues to evolve and inspire locally and globally.

The Indian fashion market is distinguished by its diversity, vibrancy, and a rich blend of cultural heritage, making it uniquely different from other global fashion markets. Here are some distinctive features and contributions to its diversity and vibrancy:

The Indian fashion industry is known for its fusion of traditional crafts and contemporary designs, resulting in a unique identity that heavily relies on embellishments and traditional styles rather than Western-style cuts and designs. Early entrepreneurs who emphasized these conventional aspects significantly influenced this approach, leading to the industry's evolution since the mid-1980s (Khaira, 2011).

Despite being a newcomer to the global fashion scene, India's fashion industry has experienced rapid growth and innovation. This growth is fueled by expanding product bases, innovative technology integration, and exploration of new business avenues. The apparel sector, one of India's largest industrial sectors, is vital to the economy's growth, attracting significant interest from global brands and investors (Kumar and Raju, 2018).

The Indian fashion industry reflects the country's vast cultural and social diversity. From traditional silk saris to modern designer wear, Indian fashion is a testament to the country's intricate social, religious, and cultural nuances. This diversity adds vibrancy to the fashion scene and offers a wide range of styles and preferences across different consumer segments (Venkatesh and Kumarasamy, 2015).

The younger generation in India is highly fashion-conscious and significantly influenced by global trends, digital media, and celebrity endorsements. The rising demand for fashion accessories and branded apparel among Indian youths highlights the market's dynamism and vibrancy. This trend also indicates a growing middle class with disposable income, contributing to the overall growth of the fashion industry in India (Acharya and Gupta, 2016).

The Indian fashion industry has experienced both opportunities and challenges due to globalization. One of the significant challenges is related to intellectual property rights, particularly the presence of counterfeit goods and the need for comprehensive statutes to safeguard innovative and distinctive fashion designs. It is essential to address these concerns to ensure the continued growth and distinctiveness of the Indian fashion market, as noted by Khan (2022).

The Indian fashion market is unique and diverse, blending traditional crafts with contemporary designs. Despite being a newcomer to the global fashion scene, India's fashion industry has experienced rapid growth and innovation. The industry reflects the country's vast cultural and social diversity, adding vibrancy to the fashion scene and offering various styles and preferences across consumer segments. The younger generation in India is highly fashion-conscious and significantly influenced by global trends. However, the industry faces intellectual property rights challenges, particularly

counterfeit goods, which need to be addressed to ensure continued growth and distinctiveness.

1.1.3 Challenges of Scaling Fashion Businesses

The Indian fashion industry offers excellent opportunities for growth and innovation, but it also presents some challenges for fashion entrepreneurs. One significant challenge is that the market needs to be more cohesive, which means that many small-scale manufacturers, retailers, and designers operate in niche segments. This can make managing the supply chain, distribution, and brand-building difficult.

Another significant challenge is the limited access to finance for fashion businesses in India. Despite various government schemes and financial institutions, many fashion entrepreneurs, particularly those in the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME) sectors, need help to secure funding for expansion and investment in infrastructure, technology, and marketing.

The fashion industry in India faces several complex and diverse obstacles when trying to expand. These challenges include difficulty accessing finance, inadequate infrastructure, managing labor and premium clients, regulatory and compliance hurdles, and competition from established market players.

Access to finance is a significant barrier for fashion entrepreneurs seeking to expand their businesses. Obtaining funding for investment in infrastructure, technology, marketing, and talent acquisition poses a considerable challenge, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating in the fashion sector. Without sufficient capital, businesses may struggle to finance expansion initiatives, innovate product offerings, or penetrate new markets, impeding their scalability.

Inadequate infrastructure, including transportation, logistics, and manufacturing facilities, poses another obstacle to scaling fashion businesses in India. Infrastructure

deficiencies can lead to supply chain disruptions, delays in production, and increased operating costs, hindering businesses' ability to meet growing demand and deliver products efficiently. Moreover, infrastructure constraints may limit access to remote or underserved markets, constraining businesses' growth potential.

Complexities in managing labor and premium clients further exacerbate the scalability challenges fashion businesses face in India. Labor management issues, such as skilled labor shortages, labor disputes, and compliance with labor regulations, can impact production timelines, product quality, and overall operational efficiency. Similarly, catering to premium clients entails meeting high expectations for product quality, customization, and service excellence, which may require additional resources and capabilities.

Regulatory and compliance hurdles also pose significant obstacles to scaling fashion businesses in India. Navigating complex regulatory frameworks, obtaining licenses and permits, and complying with industry standards and regulations can be time-consuming and costly for companies operating across multiple jurisdictions or engaging in international trade. Failure to comply with regulatory requirements can result in legal liabilities, reputational damage, and disruptions to business operations, impeding scalability efforts.

Additionally, fierce competition from established players in the market presents a formidable challenge for emerging fashion businesses seeking to scale up. Established brands often enjoy substantial brand equity, extensive distribution networks, and loyal customer bases, making it challenging for new entrants to gain market share and differentiate themselves. Overcoming competition requires innovative strategies, unique value propositions, and agile business models that resonate with target consumers and capture market opportunities.

In summary, the fashion industry in India faces various obstacles when attempting to scale up, including limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, complexities in managing labor and premium clients, regulatory and compliance hurdles, and fierce competition from established players. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach encompassing financial planning, infrastructure development, talent management, regulatory compliance, and strategic positioning within the competitive landscape.

Fashion businesses in India face significant obstacles when scaling up, including challenges that vary across different industry segments, such as luxury, fast fashion, and ethnic wear:

Partnerships with Global Brands: Indian corporations perceive a considerable opportunity to collaborate with upscale brands that intend to penetrate the Indian market. However, the lack of any Indian retail brand that meets the criteria of being a luxury brand constitutes a significant hurdle. The worldwide recognition of the preparedness for luxury as an organized market has led to international luxury brands exploring various avenues and partnerships to enter the Indian retail market. This creates a competitive atmosphere for domestic luxury fashion businesses striving to expand their operations (Kumar and Raju, 2018).

Environmental Impact and Sustainability Concerns: The fast fashion model, which involves rapid manufacturing and cheaper materials, faces sustainability-related issues. These issues include the negative environmental impact of disposable fashion and labor exploitation in emerging markets. Consumers are becoming more conscious of these problems. They are thus demanding more sustainable practices, which puts pressure on fast fashion businesses to adapt their models while also attempting to expand (Jha and Veeramani, 2021).

Consumer Innovativeness and Evaluation Attributes: In India, the acquisition of trendy ethnic clothing is shaped by consumer innovativeness and evaluation attributes. It is imperative for businesses seeking growth to comprehend consumer behavior in this category. The obstacles include harmonizing product offerings with consumer innovativeness and efficiently handling consumer evaluation attributes to satisfy the expectations of both purchasers and non-purchasers during the purchase process (Chakrabarti and Baisya, 2009).

Sustainability and Environmental Concerns: The fashion industry significantly impacts the environment, which has led to growing interest among consumers in eco-friendly clothing. However, it is challenging for companies to meet this demand while making a profit and remaining competitive (Goswami, 2008).

Brand Equity and Consumer Perception: Challenges faced by foreign fashion brands in the Indian market are related to the creation of brand equity and the navigation of consumer perceptions. In order to succeed in the competitive Indian fashion market, domestic and international brands must clearly understand the factors that influence brand equity and loyalty among Indian consumers. This understanding is essential for brands attempting to scale up and expand their presence in the Indian market (Khan and Khan, 2017).

To summarize, Indian fashion companies that aim to expand must overcome challenges specific to their sector, such as addressing sustainability issues in both fast fashion and luxury and understanding consumer behavior in ethnic wear. Furthermore, broader concerns such as environmental impact, brand reputation, and consumer perception significantly impact all segments of the industry.

Shifts in consumer preferences, market trends, and economic conditions significantly influence the scalability and sustainability of fashion businesses in India.

Companies need to adapt by understanding and leveraging these shifts to maintain competitiveness. :

In today's world, the younger generation is increasingly mindful of sustainability concerns and the circular economy, shaping their views on the fashion industry. Fashion brands must adapt their business models to align with these values to appeal to and retain these conscientious consumers (Gazzola et al., 2020). Additionally, social factors and the formation of habits can play a significant role in promoting sustainable consumer behavior. By utilizing marketing strategies that leverage social influence and foster habit formation, brands can encourage more eco-friendly consumption practices (White et al., 2019).

As Jung et al. (2020) note, sustainable marketing activities in the traditional fashion market can positively impact brand image, trust, satisfaction, and loyalty. Incorporating sustainable practices in marketing strategies can help attract new customers and enhance customer retention.

The Emergence of E-Commerce and Digital Transformation: In today's business landscape, leveraging e-commerce offers a sustainable future compared to traditional practices. With the help of online platforms, businesses can improve brand visibility and connect with a broader range of consumers at a lower cost. It is crucial to integrate e-commerce strategies with sustainable development principles for enduring success (Sur, 2018).

Adaptation Strategies for Businesses:

1. **Leverage Technology and Analytics:** Use advanced analytics to deeply understand changing consumer behaviors and preferences. This enables the personalization of offerings and more targeted marketing strategies.

2. Invest in Sustainable Practices: Incorporate sustainable and ethical practices throughout the supply chain. This includes using eco-friendly materials, adopting green manufacturing processes, and ensuring fair labor practices. Transparency in these areas can significantly boost brand image and loyalty.

3. Educate Consumers: Actively educate consumers about the importance of sustainability in fashion. This could be through marketing campaigns, sustainability reports, and interactive platforms that allow consumers to understand the impact of their purchases.

4. Innovate Product Offerings: Continuously innovate product offerings to align with the latest trends in sustainability and consumer preferences. This includes exploring new materials, recycling initiatives, and designs that reduce waste.

5. Strengthen Online Presence: Strengthen the online presence through e-commerce platforms and social media. Utilize digital marketing strategies to connect with younger generations who prefer shopping online and are influenced by digital trends.

The above strategies businesses can use to promote sustainability in the fashion industry. These strategies include leveraging technology and analytics to personalize offerings, investing in sustainable practices throughout the supply chain, educating consumers about sustainability, innovating product offerings, and strengthening the online presence through e-commerce and social media. By implementing these strategies, businesses can improve their brand image and foster greater loyalty among consumers increasingly concerned about sustainability.

1.1.4 Significance of Scaling Fashion Businesses

Scaling fashion businesses is crucial for India's economic growth, innovation, and employment generation. By expanding their reach and impact, fashion entrepreneurs can

create new opportunities for artisans, weavers, and craftsmen, preserving traditional skills and promoting sustainable livelihoods.

Scaling fashion businesses can also increase the country's export earnings and trade competitiveness by showcasing India's rich cultural heritage and design prowess on a global platform. Additionally, it allows fashion brands to adopt sustainable practices, invest in research and development, and leverage technology to enhance efficiency and productivity.

Moreover, scaling fashion businesses can promote social change and empowerment by promoting gender equality, inclusivity, and diversity in the workforce. By providing employment opportunities for women and marginalized communities, fashion businesses can contribute to poverty alleviation and social development, creating a more equitable and inclusive society.

Overall, scaling fashion businesses is significant because of its potential to drive economic growth, foster innovation, and promote social development in India. By overcoming the challenges and seizing the opportunities inherent in the Indian fashion market, fashion entrepreneurs can unlock new pathways to success and sustainability in fashion entrepreneurship's dynamic and evolving world.

The expansion of fashion enterprises in India significantly influences the Indian fashion industry's competitiveness, innovation, and global recognition.

Competitiveness: The growth of fashion companies in developing countries such as India leads to a faster consumption rate. Large businesses with strong brands, high-quality customer service, innovative technology, and infrastructure are improving their competitive position in the global market. Emerging markets like India offer strategic opportunities for long-term development, which can help increase the competitiveness of domestic fashion companies in the international arena (Khvorostyanaya, 2021).

Innovation: Changes in regulations and economic policies have made it easier for new and unconventional ideas to be introduced and accepted in creative industries like fashion. This has led to global fashion trends being embraced by the Indian fashion

industry. As a result, previously overlooked innovations are now gaining more exposure and contributing to the growth of the Indian fashion industry (Khaire and Hall, 2016).

Global Recognition: The Indian fashion industry is growing by blending local culture with global fashion trends, which has helped it gain recognition worldwide. Indian fashion brands are now using the country's rich textile heritage and craftsmanship to create modern designs for domestic and international markets. The industry's unique identity, based on traditional styles and innovation, has played a vital role in setting it apart from other fashion markets (Kumar and Raju, 2018).

The fashion industry in India has been expanding rapidly, demonstrating its dynamic nature and offering immense potential for further growth at the global level. With an unwavering focus on innovation and an ability to adapt to changing global trends, the Indian fashion industry can improve its competitiveness and gain more recognition worldwide. By leveraging its rich cultural heritage, diverse craftsmanship, and emerging talent, the Indian fashion sector is poised to impact the global fashion landscape significantly.

1.2 Research Problem

The fashion industry in India has been experiencing a significant surge in recent years, with many entrepreneurs seeking to capitalize on the country's rich cultural heritage and growing market opportunities. However, despite this proliferation of fashion businesses, many need help scaling up and achieving profitability. These challenges include limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, and difficulties managing labor and premium clientele. Furthermore, the education system has been criticized for failing to equip fashion students with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in the industry. The need for more research on effective strategies for scaling a fashion business in India adds to these issues. Therefore, further investigation is crucial to understand the challenges fashion businesses face in India and develop strategies to overcome them. Additionally, the role of the education system in empowering fashion students to navigate the industry's complexities is also critical. The problem statement, "From Passion to Profit: Navigating the Challenges of Scaling a Fashion Business in

India," emphasizes the central theme of the research, highlighting the journey of fashion entrepreneurs striving to transform their passion for fashion into profitable ventures amidst the challenges prevalent in the Indian market.

The fashion industry in India has experienced a surge in recent years, but many businesses need help to scale and achieve profitability. Challenges include limited access to finance, inadequate infrastructure, and difficulties managing labor and premium clientele. The education system has been criticized for failing to equip fashion students with the necessary skills. Further research is needed to understand the challenges and develop strategies to overcome them, and the role of education in empowering students is critical. The problem statement highlights the journey of fashion entrepreneurs striving to transform their passion into profitable ventures amidst challenges in the Indian market.

1.3 Purpose of Research

The fashion industry in India has seen tremendous growth in recent years, and it has enormous potential for further expansion and success. However, fashion entrepreneurs face significant and complex challenges when scaling up their businesses. These challenges include fierce competition, lack of access to capital, limited infrastructure, and inadequate support systems. To succeed, fashion entrepreneurs must possess unique skills, including creativity, business acumen, and a strong market understanding. Moreover, the education system must equip fashion students with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in this highly competitive industry. This includes providing access to modern technology, training in digital marketing, and developing a robust network of industry connections.

The education system plays a vital role in shaping the skills and knowledge of future fashion entrepreneurs. By exploring the role of the education system in empowering fashion students, this study aims to identify gaps and propose improvements. Enhancing the educational curriculum, training programs, and support structures can equip aspiring fashion students with the necessary competencies to succeed in the Indian fashion industry.

To address these challenges, this research aims to identify the main obstacles fashion businesses face in India when scaling up and provide practical solutions to overcome these challenges. Furthermore, the study seeks to investigate the role of the education system in empowering fashion students, identify the critical skill set required for fashion entrepreneurship in India, and identify successful role models by examining case studies of successful fashion entrepreneurs. By undertaking this research, we hope to contribute to the growth and success of the fashion industry in India and support the next generation of fashion entrepreneurs.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The importance of this study lies in its potential to increase awareness of the challenges faced by fashion entrepreneurs in the Indian context. By identifying the challenges and providing recommendations, this research can contribute to the development of strategies to support the growth of the Indian fashion industry. Additionally, fashion entrepreneurs play a critical role in promoting health awareness by developing innovative and sustainable fashion products. As such, this study can help fashion entrepreneurs create products that promote health awareness while also addressing the challenges they face in the Indian market.

The fashion industry in India is characterized by its rapid pace and evolving trends. The short product lifecycle and the need for effective marketing and sales strategies pose significant challenges for fashion entrepreneurs. By conducting this study, I aim to address these challenges and contribute to the development of practical solutions that can empower fashion businesses to thrive in this dynamic industry.

In summary, this chapter introduces the challenges faced by Indian fashion entrepreneurs in scaling their businesses. The motivation behind this study is to provide insights into the various aspects of fashion entrepreneurship. Its importance lies in its potential to increase awareness of the challenges faced by fashion entrepreneurs and contribute to the growth of the Indian fashion industry.

1.5 Research Purpose and Questions

The Indian fashion industry has grown rapidly in recent years, with increasing numbers of entrepreneurs launching their own fashion businesses. However, many of these businesses struggle to scale up and achieve profitability due to a range of challenges, such as limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, and difficulty in managing labour and premium clients. Additionally, the education system has not adequately prepared fashion students with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in the industry. The problem is further compounded by the lack of research on successful strategies for scaling a fashion business in India. As such, there is a need for further investigation into the challenges faced by fashion businesses in India when scaling up and strategies to overcome them, as well as the role of the education system in empowering fashion students to succeed in the industry.

Following are the research questions possible for the taken underline research:

1. What are the main challenges faced by fashion businesses in India when scaling up?
2. How can fashion businesses in India overcome these challenges and achieve profitability?
3. What are the most successful strategies for scaling a fashion business in India?
4. What is the key success factor for fashion businesses in India?
5. How education system can play a role to empower fashion students?

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

India's fashion industry is rapidly growing and offering an attractive market for entrepreneurial ventures. With numerous brands and unique designs, the Indian fashion industry is globally recognized for its distinctive patterns and colors. The emergence of e-commerce websites, 3D printing, "computational" technologies, and AI-based marketing methods has revolutionized the fashion industry and opened up new entrepreneurial opportunities. However, the fashion sector has challenges, such as business circumstances, economic finance, government support, and fashion clusters, making entrepreneurship challenging.

A solid education is crucial for entrepreneurship success. Fashion schools should focus on nurturing students' creativity and preparing them for careers as freelancers or business owners. The education system needs to be improved to provide students with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in the workforce. Topics such as fashion and apparel design, entrepreneurship, business, law, and communication are just a few examples that need to be addressed.

This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the challenges faced by Indian fashion entrepreneurs and highlights the changes required in the current education system to add value to fashion entrepreneurship. The study identifies the factors affecting fashion entrepreneurship, the challenges entrepreneurs face in scaling their businesses, and the gaps in current research. Addressing these issues can create a more constructive and supportive environment for fashion entrepreneurs to thrive and succeed.

2.2 Overview of the Global Fashion Industry

The global fashion industry is a complex ecosystem that involves the design, production, distribution, and consumption of apparel, footwear, accessories, and textiles. Its vast and interconnected sector spans continents, cultures, and market segments, significantly shaping economies, societies, and individual identities worldwide.

At its core, the global fashion industry is driven by creativity, innovation, and consumer demand. Fashion designers and brands strive to anticipate and interpret emerging trends, translating cultural influences, technological advancements, and societal shifts into compelling products and experiences. These products range from high-end couture creations to mass-produced garments, reflecting diverse styles, aesthetics, and price points to cater to a broad spectrum of consumer preferences.

The global fashion industry is known for its fast-paced and ever-evolving nature. Trends emerge and evolve rapidly, driven by celebrity endorsements, social media influencers, and cultural zeitgeists. Fashion seasons, traditionally dictated by biannual collections showcased during fashion weeks in major fashion capitals like Paris, Milan, New York, and London, continue to set the pace for the industry, driving consumer expectations and purchasing behaviors.

The global fashion industry is also characterized by its complex and interconnected supply chain, which encompasses various stages of production, from raw material sourcing and manufacturing to distribution and retailing. Fashion companies often operate in a globalized marketplace, outsourcing production to countries with lower labor costs and establishing extensive networks of suppliers, manufacturers, and logistics partners to streamline operations and optimize efficiency.

Socio-cultural, economic, and environmental factors deeply influence the global fashion industry. Changing lifestyles, demographic shifts, and cultural attitudes toward fashion shape consumer preferences and market trends, driving demand for specific styles, materials, and product features. Economic conditions, including income levels, employment rates, and currency fluctuations, influence market dynamics, industry performance, consumer spending patterns, and purchasing power.

Sustainability and ethical considerations have emerged as significant issues within the global fashion industry, prompting increased scrutiny and demands for transparency and accountability. Consumers, activists, and policymakers call for greater sustainability across the fashion supply chain, from sourcing sustainable materials and reducing carbon emissions to promoting fair labor practices and minimizing waste.

The global fashion industry is a vast and complex sector that involves multiple activities, from design and production to distribution and consumption. It is driven by creativity, innovation, and consumer demand and reflects diverse styles, aesthetics, and price points. With its complex supply chain, diverse market segments, and evolving socio-cultural and environmental dynamics, the global fashion industry continues to shape trends, drive economic growth, and influence societies worldwide.

2.3 Scaling Fashion Businesses

Scaling significantly impacts the way fashion businesses grow and operate. This has far-reaching effects on the organizational structure, management practices, and corporate culture, affecting the business's sustainability and growth.

1. **Organizational Structure:** The process of scaling frequently requires fashion businesses to adjust their organizational structure. As these companies expand in size and complexity, it becomes necessary to reassess their hierarchies, roles, and reporting lines

to ensure effective coordination and communication. This may entail the formation of fresh departments or divisions, implementing cross-functional teams, or adopting matrix structures to support a range of business functions. Furthermore, successful scaling may involve delegating decision-making authority and empowering middle managers to promote operational efficiency and flexibility.

2. Management Practices: When fashion businesses grow, their management practices are affected. Leaders may need to introduce new management systems, processes, and tools to support growth and make decisions. This can involve using performance metrics, KPIs, and dashboards to monitor essential business indicators and track progress toward goals. Managers may also need to improve their leadership, communication, and change management skills to lead teams effectively through growth and change.

3. Corporate Culture: When fashion businesses expand, it can significantly impact the company culture. Companies should establish a culture of innovation, adaptability, and collaboration to encourage creativity and continuous improvement. This might involve promoting agility, customer focus, and a spirit of entrepreneurship to empower employees to embrace change and take calculated risks. To ensure a supportive and engaged workforce that shares the company's mission and values, companies should prioritize inclusivity, diversity, and employee well-being when scaling up.

Implications for Business Sustainability and Growth:

Scaling profoundly impacts the organizational structure, management practices, and corporate culture of fashion businesses, which in turn affects business sustainability and growth. To ensure sustainable growth, fashion businesses need to focus on the following key areas:

1. **Operational Efficiency:** By streamlining organizational structures and adopting efficient management practices, fashion businesses can enhance operational efficiency, reduce costs, and improve productivity. This can support sustainable business growth.

2. **Innovation and Adaptability:** To drive sustainable growth, fashion businesses must cultivate a culture of innovation and adaptability. This can enable them to respond effectively to market changes, consumer preferences, and industry trends. This, in turn, can lead to sustainable growth through product innovation, market expansion, and competitive differentiation.

3. **Talent Management:** Investing in talent development, leadership training, and employee engagement initiatives can attract and retain top talent, foster a culture of excellence, and build organizational capabilities. This can fuel long-term growth and sustainability.

4. **Customer Experience:** By aligning organizational structures, management practices, and corporate culture with a customer-centric mindset, fashion businesses can enhance the customer experience, foster brand loyalty, and drive sustainable growth through repeat business and positive word-of-mouth.

5. **Risk Management:** Fashion businesses need to implement robust risk management practices, governance structures, and compliance frameworks to mitigate risks associated with scaling. This ensures business continuity and safeguards against potential reputational, financial, and operational risks.

Scaling significantly impacts fashion businesses' organizational structure, management practices, and corporate culture, with implications for business sustainability and growth. By aligning these elements with strategic objectives, values, and market dynamics, fashion businesses can effectively navigate the complexities of

scaling and position themselves for long-term success in a competitive and rapidly evolving industry landscape.

Branding, marketing, and market positioning are crucial for fashion businesses to grow and succeed. They influence how customers view the brand, how loyal they are, and whether or not they will buy from it again. These factors shape buyer perceptions and ultimately impact the success of fashion businesses. Fashion businesses can improve their scalability and sustainability in a highly competitive market by focusing on these elements.

According to recent research, brand image, satisfaction, and happiness determine consumer loyalty in the fashion industry. This highlights the need for effective differentiation and brand positioning strategies in a highly competitive global market (Cuesta-Valiño et al., 2021). Furthermore, a study on brand experience dimensions - including behavioral, intellectual, sensory, and affective - revealed that they positively impact perceived brand authenticity (PBA), a crucial predictor of consumer loyalty. This research provides valuable insights into developing strong consumer-brand relationships, especially for authentic global brands (Safeer et al., 2021).

An in-depth analysis of the correlation between fashion brand image value creation, customer participation behavior, experience value perception, intention, trust, and loyalty has been conducted. This study offers invaluable insights and recommendations for fashion enterprises. It indicates that customer participation and experience value perception serve as critical intermediaries, shaping the direction of brand image value creation and guiding the implementation of brand construction and marketing strategies (Chen et al., 2022).

A recent study examined ethical marketing practices in B2C transactions and their impact on consumer-brand relationships and perceived product quality. The study

found that using ethical views to guide the four main marketing components (product, price, place, and promotion) is essential for building solid consumer-brand relationships and boosting product quality perception. These factors, in turn, can influence corporate brand loyalty (Lee and Jin, 2019).

To succeed in the global fashion market, businesses must prioritize building a strong brand image, providing positive experiences, using ethical marketing practices, and ensuring customer satisfaction. These strategies are essential to scaling up and staying competitive. By understanding and implementing these elements effectively, fashion brands can shape consumer perceptions and cultivate brand loyalty, which leads to long-term success and sustainability.

The international expansion and market penetration of fashion businesses presents significant opportunities and formidable challenges. Here is an overview based on the insights from various studies:

Opportunities: Rapidly developing consumption rates and strategic opportunities for long-term development are offered by emerging-market countries, particularly in nations like China, India, and Brazil. Large industrial enterprises with solid brands and high-quality customer service are well-placed to exploit these opportunities (Khvorostyanaya, 2021).

A case study on the fashion industry highlights the significance of business relationships as a learning context, which can offer opportunities and constraints in internationalization. This underscores the connection between the specific business model, international patterns followed, and business relationships (Guercini and Runfola, 2010).

The emergence of e-commerce offers a sustainable business future compared to traditional practices, helping to increase brand awareness and reach a diverse consumer

base at lower costs. This shift has particularly impacted the rapidly changing global retail market (Dixit and Sinha, 2016).

Challenges: European technology firms that originate in less competitive environments are confronted with the challenge of market fragmentation, which includes differences in languages, cultures, legislation, and taxation. Although initially advantageous for local entrenchment, this fragmentation can hinder pan-European and global expansion in the long run (Darsch et al., 2007).

Global expansion presents strategic and operational challenges for businesses seeking new opportunities, which may affect their ability to remain competitive in existing markets. For example, Italian fashion SMEs require assistance in balancing international growth with market exploitation.

As companies expand their operations overseas, aligning their internal business strategies and management practices with external market conditions becomes crucial. Failure to do so can result in loss of sales, reduction of market share, and strategic confusion, as observed in organizations that expand without considering organizational design before developing an internationalization strategy (Ameer and Ayomi, 2014).

In conclusion, while global expansion offers lucrative opportunities for growth and market diversification, it also presents many challenges that require careful strategic planning, an understanding of local markets, and adaptive business models to ensure successful internationalization and sustainability in the competitive fashion industry landscape.

2.4 Models of Business Scaling

Fashion businesses in India have many scaling models to bolster their market presence, expand their offerings, and attain sustainable growth. One such model is vertical integration, which involves expanding companies along the supply chain by integrating different production stages. This can be achieved by building manufacturing facilities, investing in textile mills, or acquiring retail outlets to exert greater control over product quality, costs, and delivery. Vertical integration reduces dependency on external suppliers and mitigates supply chain risks by streamlining operations and enhancing competitiveness.

Another popular approach is horizontal expansion, which empowers fashion businesses to broaden their geographical reach by tapping into new markets or customer segments. This may involve launching new retail stores, e-commerce platforms, or distributor partnerships. By diversifying revenue streams and capitalizing on economies of scale, horizontal expansion enables companies to tap into emerging market opportunities and strengthen their market position (Centra,2023).

Brand diversification is another prevalent model that allows fashion companies to extend their brand portfolio by introducing new product lines or categories. It may include launching diffusion lines, capsule collections, or designer collaborations. By leveraging existing brand equity to cater to diverse consumer preferences, brand diversification helps companies maintain relevance in a competitive market landscape. Expanding brand offerings also enables companies to capture new market segments and foster brand loyalty among consumers.

Franchising and licensing are additional scaling models where fashion businesses grant third parties the right to use their brand name and business model for a fee. This allows companies to expand rapidly without the capital investment and operational risks associated with direct ownership. Leveraging the local expertise and resources of

franchisees or licensees, franchising and licensing are valuable tools for penetrating new markets and driving growth.

Strategic partnerships and alliances also play a crucial role in scaling fashion businesses. Companies can access new resources, capabilities, and distribution channels by collaborating with suppliers, manufacturers, retailers, or technology firms. Strategic alliances help fashion businesses leverage complementary strengths, accelerate innovation, and expand market reach.

In summary, fashion businesses in India have a range of scaling models at their disposal, each offering unique benefits that can be tailored to suit their specific needs. Adopting appropriate scaling models allows fashion businesses to navigate market complexities, capitalize on emerging opportunities, and achieve sustainable growth in the dynamic fashion industry.

Fashion businesses in India employ various scaling models, focusing on sustainable growth, innovation, and adapting to changing market dynamics. Here is an overview of different models highlighted in recent research:

Circular Business Models (CBMs): The fashion industry is increasingly exploring CBMs to enhance sustainability. These models involve dynamic capabilities such as sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring to achieve scalability. They emphasize the micro-foundations required for scaling practices, such as narrowing, slowing, and closing the loop of resources, which are crucial for reducing environmental impact (Sandberg and Hultberg, 2021).

Innovative Sustainable Business Models: With a focus on sustainability as a defining characteristic, particularly in value proposition, these models are gaining traction. They incorporate trends like the circular economy, fair trade, and the sharing

economy, aiming to address environmental and social sustainability while ensuring business success (Todeschini et al., 2017).

Fast Fashion: This business model offers fashionable clothes at affordable prices, relying on a highly responsive supply chain to support a rapidly changing product assortment. Despite its simplicity, executing the fast-fashion model effectively involves numerous challenges, requiring businesses to be efficient, speedy, and flexible (Caro and Martínez-de-Albéniz, 2015).

Digital Business Models: Digital technologies have enabled new scalable business models in fashion. These models leverage digital platforms for customer engagement, self-customization, and orchestrating networked value chains, such as multi-sided platforms or online marketplaces (Zhang et al., 2015).

Sustainable Fashion Business Models: Emphasizing the need for environmentally sustainable practices, these models focus on using eco-friendly materials, reducing waste through pre-order systems, and engaging in social and environmental activities. They highlight the importance of creating a solid business narrative and concept to increase sales and customer loyalty (Berliandika et al., 2021).

These models demonstrate the diverse strategies employed by fashion businesses in India to achieve scalability while addressing the challenges of sustainability, market responsiveness, and digital transformation. Each model reflects a unique approach to navigating the complexities of the global fashion industry, emphasizing the need for innovation, sustainability, and adaptability.

2.5 Cultural and Economic Factors Affecting Fashion Businesses in India

Grégoire, D. A., et al. (2011) used the literature on the methodology and practice of cognitive research to create a framework for the study of entrepreneurial thought. The study examined the subject's current status by doing a content analysis of entrepreneurial

cognition publications published between 1976 and 2008 to better define this goal. According to the study, research on entrepreneurial cognition has not properly articulated crucial conceptual characteristics of the cognitive viewpoint, although investigating numerous significant variables. As a result of these findings, the study suggested tangible methodologies and research objectives expand the scope of entrepreneurial cognition research beyond its present emphasis on ‘cognitive implications.

Jonsson, S. (2015) studied the development of entrepreneurs’ networks during the early stages of their businesses. Using case studies of six fashion startups, the study investigated entrepreneurs’ network evolution (i.e., initiation of new connections) throughout the startup period to obtain resources and support for businesses’ goals from a structural, relational, and cognitive viewpoint on social capital. The cognitive aspect of social capital was a primary area of interest for the study. Since shifts in consumer preferences lead to new business openings, the fashion sector proved to be an ideal study setting. The results demonstrated the significance of exhibiting cognitive traits in developing structural social capital (forming fresh connections with one another). The results also showed that partnerships started on the basis of the cognitive dimension are more likely to become embedded relationships, which are strong on the relational dimension and provide access to private information containing recommendations to other actors.

Arafat, M. Y., et al. (2020), from the viewpoints of both cognitive and social capital, the factors that influence the tendency of Indian women to engage in entrepreneurial activity. The focus of the study was narrowed to improve the understanding of women who are business owners at a certain level. A data set from the “Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Adult Population Survey” was utilized, with a sample size of 1,305 Indians, and the statistical method of binary logistic regression was applied

to the data. The findings demonstrated that the opportunities for women to engage in entrepreneurship do not have a significant influence on this behavior; women's perceptions of the risks associated with becoming entrepreneurs discourage them from doing so; women's perceptions of their own capabilities influence their decision to engage in entrepreneurial activity; women's social networks motivate them to engage in entrepreneurial activity, and being an informal investor encourages them to begin their venture. Surprisingly, the research could not discover any evidence to support the concept of opportunity perception.

Fini and Toschi (2016) investigated whether or not academic and non-academic entrepreneurs implement their corporate entrepreneurial aims differently. It was discovered through cognitive research constructs and the use of the theory of institutional logic that academic entrepreneurs, despite their entrepreneurship activity, still act in keeping with the academic institutional context to which they belong when putting their company entrepreneurial intentions into practice. The study used a matched-pairs research methodology, and the findings showed that academic entrepreneurs (as opposed to non-academic ones) placed a lot higher value on knowing their technical competencies and a much lower value on knowing their management ones. The study analyzed the relationship between cognitive and institutional elements and their effects on the creation of entrepreneurial value in new businesses, and it offered theoretical and managerial implications based on these findings.

Zhao and Davis (2017) looked into whether or not American fashion students want to start their own businesses after graduation. In-depth interviews with free-form questions were used for the study. Insights, experiences, and points of view that would be difficult to gain using other research methods can be effectively uncovered using this qualitative approach. Studies found that an entrepreneur's personality traits were quite

important. Entrepreneurial-minded students cited the following personality traits as important to their success: “creativity,” “outgoingness,” “perseverance,” “hard effort,” and “openness.” It’s up to them to decide what happens next. Students majoring in fashion are known to be more self-promotional than their counterparts in other disciplines.

Kusumsiri and Jayawardane (2013) identified critical success factors for fashion designer start-ups in Sri Lanka. The study was built on the qualitative exploratory phase of a larger investigation. The research, which relied on in-depth interview methods, aimed to identify the variables that entrepreneurs believe contribute most to their success. Results broke down into four primary propositions related to behavioral variables, social capital, human capital, and strategic considerations, all of which were shown to be crucial to success. Proactivity, opportunity recognition, and inventiveness are three of the most talked-about personality traits. Most efforts were put into developing techniques for fostering an innovative mindset, differentiating from the competition, and making the most of available human resources. The innovation process distinguished between start-up and established entrepreneurs’ tactics, even if the sample size was too small to support such a conclusion.

2.6 Entrepreneurial Strategies for Growth

Khair, M. (2013) hypothesized that innovative entrepreneurship in the creative industries has far-reaching cultural effects, as doing so necessitates and results in a shift in societal norms and values in order to create a market for the novel product introduced by these entrepreneurs. The study argued that the pioneering entrepreneurial and organizational initiatives driving the creation of a market for modern Indian art and the establishment of a high-end fashion business in India had a larger collective and cultural influence by using these examples. The growth and institutionalization of these

marketplaces necessitated a reinterpretation of cultural norms in which the previously cherished conventional was de-emphasized, and emphasis was instead put on the individual and original. This newfound openness to purchasing unique items as manifestations of individual individuality and taste, unrestrained by tradition and its associated concepts of value and appropriateness, is indicative of the modernity brought in by these trailblazing entrepreneurs in India.

Ünay and Zehir (2012) presented further information on the topic of “innovative entrepreneurship,” with an emphasis on the definitions and theories around the concepts of innovation and entrepreneurship. The study’s findings might be used to support the claim, advanced in the context of the extensive literature on the subject of innovation-related entrepreneurship, that successful fashion enterprises and fashion-industry employers necessitate high levels of innovativeness and entrepreneurship. The literature is unanimous in its assertion that a company’s ability to innovate is directly correlated with its success. This claim was supported by examples drawn from the fashion industry, including both established businesses and up-and-coming startups led by aspiring fashion designers. The report’s last section assessed the efficacy of present approaches to managing innovation in the apparel business. Despite fashion’s significant impact on modern culture, it has received insufficient examination from a management standpoint, leading to the idea that “fashion innovation and business intellect” are mutually exclusive. Due to the rapid evolution of business strategies associated with fashion management, today’s global fashion industry needs not just a high degree of creativity and invention but also highly complex management practices.

Trequattrini, R., et al. (2018) intended to examine how combining female and male perspectives in business might produce innovative organizational structures and to identify effective means of facilitating the exchange of values and goals using modern

means of communication and information exchange like social media. Based on the androgynous organization theory, the study looked specifically at the fashion industry, which in recent years has been at the forefront of experimenting with new forms of female business in tandem with the emergence of new markets brought about by the rise of the internet and web 2.0. The study used a qualitative approach to examine the ways in which fashion influencer Chiara Ferragni, who topped Forbes' list of 2017's Top Influencers, put into practice the theoretical framework of the androgynous organization "Granelli and Robotti in Il valore premiante delle diversità, Harvard Business Review Italia, StrategiQs, Milano, 2016." The study established a paradigm that allows businesses to be much more creative and, in particular, establishes the unique qualities of women, which firms must introduce to become more generative.

Bhachu, P. (2004) examined the cultural goods purchased by British Asian women and the aesthetics that inform their choice of clothing as a means of investigating diasporic cultural production in global markets. Salwar-kameez also known as Punjabi suits, have become increasingly commodified in recent years, and the study examined the clothing market, the designs negotiated within it, and the commerce around it to highlight these changes. The research highlighted the commercial and cultural agency of Asian women within this highly charged consumer material culture of what was once considered 'straightforward ethnic' garments, highlighting their role in the dialectic and dynamic suturing of global cultural landscapes.

Vanoni and Omaña (2021) noted that the fashion business in Colombia had been one of the fastest growing in recent years, with earnings of about 20.2 billion Colombian pesos (equivalent to over 1.3 million items sold). The study examined the growth of women-run businesses in the fashion industry over the past several years using illustrative scenarios in which women play a pivotal role as entrepreneurs to draw

conclusions. The authors chose three women-run fashion enterprises operating in Colombia for their research. As a result, the study determined which businesses treat their leaders as integral members of the team, rewarding them for their contributions to the company by helping it maintain its position at the forefront of its industry both domestically and abroad through the introduction of novel products and services.

Brydges, T., et al. (2014) examined the possibilities for business expansion in the slow fashion sector during a period of profound change in the international clothing industry. The study, which drew on interviews with self-employed designers in the slow fashion industry in “Geneva (Switzerland), Rotterdam (The Netherlands), and Toronto (Canada),” contended that small, slow fashion businesses had found a way to stand out in the crowded fashion industry by being creative with their design, branding, and retail strategies. To fight the paradigm of fast fashion, which continues to dominate the fashion industry, these designers appear to be motivated by a desire to attain both personal and professional success while staying true to their core ideas and principles. As such, the study added to the knowledge of how young designers, especially those working in the slow fashion sector, approach entrepreneurship. It also added to the growing body of literature in the field of design and fashion, which takes into account the importance of handiwork and the desire to “buy local” in its forecasts of the future of making and the revitalization of traditional industries in the modern city.

Brydges and Hracs (2019) presented an original case study of a group of young, female “Millennial” independent fashion designers working in Canada’s nascent and little-studied fashion business. The study, which included 87 interviews and participant observation, showed how factors including gender, age, life stage, and socioeconomic status affect the motivations, paths, practices, and experiences of entrepreneurs. The difficulties and stresses of the “DIY (do-it-yourself)” approach were examined, as were

the ways in which different kinds of work, including artistic labour, are carried out and experienced in cyberspaces like social networking sites. The study added to the growing body of knowledge on Millennials and provided nuanced insight into the ways in which men and women approach creative work. The study moved beyond traditional masculinist conceptualizations of entrepreneurship, which tended to focus on fast-growing, high-tech companies in order to highlight the legitimacy, prevalence, and importance of alternative motivations, networks, identities, and business practices in today's markets and the creative industries.

Pather, A. (2015) analysed the necessity of local government involvement in the creative sectors and the institutional frameworks that shape such action. It was taken into account the historical background of the sector before the major interventions and the expansion that occurred throughout the assistance period. In addition, the study analysed the most pressing obstacles to an inclusive development emphasis, including the sector's ingrained deficiencies and the model's inherent flaws. Stakeholder involvement and participation remain a critical difficulty due to conventional and new political interests, but the study's suggested feedback loop and capacity to change implementation tactics may help alleviate regions of stagnation. The study indicated that the special purpose vehicle model has the greatest potential for effect and scope in industrial growth but that the complexity of managing interventions within the creative environment remains a limiting issue. The research conducted by both the thesis and Pather's analysis provides significant insights into the challenges faced by fashion businesses and the broader creative sectors. While the thesis focuses on the specific obstacles in the fashion industry, Pather's analysis offers interventions for developing the creative sector. The valuable context provided by Pather's insights on policy and institutional frameworks can help address the challenges within the fashion industry. Therefore, both works suggest

practical solutions to overcome the challenges and pave the way for profitability and growth.

Lang and Liu (2019) emphasized the significance of unique personality traits in the pursuit of a fashion business. A qualitative research approach was used to collect data from an online open-ended questionnaire. From a prominent American institution, 133 students with interest in starting their own fashion businesses after graduation were selected. With the use of Nvivo 11, the study determined college fashion students' top priorities for entrepreneurship training and support, as well as their motives for starting their own fashion firms and the cognitive aspects that were getting in the way of their success. In addition to adding to the existing body of literature, the study pointed the way toward the development of a fashion entrepreneurship curriculum from the perspective of college students with fashion majors by demonstrating empirical support to the entrepreneurship motivational theories in a more design choices entrepreneurship context.

Brydges and Hracs (2019), traditional centers of the creative economy, such as London and New York, are experiencing shifts due to autonomous production, digital technologies, and mobilities. Using 87 in-depth interviews and participant observation, the study looked at whether or not Canadian independent fashion designers still need to set up shop in the country's major fashion centers. The study investigated the decision-making processes of these entrepreneurs and showed how they use three types of mobility (temporary, mediated, and virtual) to take advantage of the possibilities and resources available to them in Canada's fashion industry.

2.7 Examination of Successful Fashion Businesses in India

After conducting qualitative case studies on successful fashion businesses in India, we have discovered a range of strategic, operational, and creative approaches that have contributed to their triumphs. These case studies encompass diverse sectors of the

fashion industry, such as retail startups, the integration of traditional craftsmanship, and pioneering fashion entrepreneurship. Below are some key highlights from our research findings:

Fashion Retail Startups by Young Entrepreneurs: A qualitative case study was conducted to explore the experiences of young entrepreneurs who have succeeded in the fashion industry. The study identified six themes that were crucial for their success. These themes include developing entrepreneurial talent with a passion for fashion, learning from trial and error, seizing global online startup opportunities, building responsive systems to adapt to market changes, distinguishing leadership with expertise, and fostering a culture of coexistence within the team (Oh, 2018).

Traditional Indian Crafts and High-End Fashion: The fashion industry in India has a distinct and unique identity, with a heavy emphasis on traditional crafts rather than Western-style innovations. This approach has been fostered and developed through the strategic actions of early entrepreneurs who recognized the value and importance of preserving India's rich cultural heritage. As a result of this approach, Indian fashion has gained significant success and global recognition, standing out as a vibrant and vibrant industry that celebrates the country's rich diversity and creativity (Khaire, 2011).

Women Entrepreneurs in Fashion and Apparel: This research examines the success factors and entrepreneurial characteristics of female entrepreneurs who run small and medium-sized fashion and apparel businesses. It focuses on the entrepreneurial traits contributing to their growth and success, underscoring the significance of an entrepreneurial mindset in the fashion industry. (Rao et al., 2013).

Zara and Nykaa: Two Successful Fashion Business Entities: In comparing Zara, a top global fast fashion brand, with Nykaa, a prominent Indian e-commerce and retail platform, a case study reveals valuable insights into their respective growth trajectories,

strengths, weaknesses, and strategic marketing strategies. This analysis highlights the crucial role of effective branding, market positioning, and the ability to adapt to local and global market trends to achieve success within the fashion industry (Kothari, 2023).

The following case studies showcase the creative and innovative approaches taken by successful fashion businesses in India. These businesses have demonstrated their ability to thrive in a highly competitive and constantly evolving market by utilizing various strategies. These include leveraging traditional craftsmanship, embracing entrepreneurial spirit, developing a strategic branding approach, and adapting to changing market trends. The insights gained from these case studies can provide valuable guidance for emerging and established fashion businesses seeking to succeed in the dynamic Indian fashion industry.

2.8 Challenges Faced by Fashion Businesses in Scaling Up

Fashion businesses, particularly those focusing on sustainability and upcycling, face various challenges in scaling up. These challenges can be multifaceted, involving issues related to material supply, market demand, production processes, and consumer engagement. Here are some critical challenges identified through research:

Material Supply and Quality Control: For fashion businesses involved in upcycling, securing a consistent supply of high-quality materials can be challenging. Variability in the types and conditions of available waste clothing and textiles can affect the production process and final product quality. Businesses need to establish reliable sources of materials and maintain stringent quality controls to ensure product consistency (Sung et al., 2020).

Consumer Awareness and Perception: Increasing consumer awareness and changing perceptions towards upcycled fashion products are essential for scaling up. Many consumers may need to be more familiar with the concept of upcycling or may

have preconceived notions about the quality and desirability of upcycled products. Educating consumers about the environmental and social benefits of upcycling and showcasing the quality and uniqueness of upcycled fashion can help overcome these challenges (Sung et al., 2018).

Operational Challenges and Resource Constraints: Small and micro-sized sustainable fashion companies often need more resources to handle operational challenges. These include difficulties in communicating the added value of sustainable products to consumers, which is critical for justifying higher prices. Furthermore, sustainable sourcing and production processes can be economically challenging in an industry dominated by mass production and low-cost logic (Hofmann et al., 2022).

Navigating the Competitive Landscape: The fashion industry is highly competitive, with fast fashion brands dominating the market through low-cost and high-volume business models. For sustainable and upcycling fashion businesses, competing in this environment requires innovative marketing strategies, strong brand differentiation, and a clear value proposition that resonates with target consumers (Aakko and Niinimäki, 2018).

Scaling Circular Business Models: Implementing and scaling circular business models in the fashion industry involves dynamic capabilities, including sensing market opportunities, seizing these opportunities, and reconfiguring operations to support sustainable practices. Successfully scaling such models requires a deep understanding of the market, innovative business practices, and adapting to changing environmental and consumer demands (Sandberg and Hultberg, 2021).

Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, including strengthening supply chain relationships, enhancing consumer engagement strategies,

optimizing operational efficiencies, and leveraging technology to support sustainable business practices.

2.8.1 Limited Access to Finance

The role of finance in fostering entrepreneurship and driving economic growth cannot be overstated. For MSMEs to thrive, timely access to financial resources is essential. However, the availability of finance, the type of funding sources, and an MSME's life cycle can all significantly impact its ability to secure the necessary resources. When financial obstacles hinder the growth of MSMEs, the nation's economic progress is also hampered (Rajamani et al., 2022).

Access to finance presents distinct challenges across all demographics. Female entrepreneurs, for instance, encounter unique financial hurdles, especially in industries such as fashion, dominated by boutiques, clothing, and fashion-related businesses. This impediment is believed to stifle their business expansion, emphasizing the necessity for tailored financial aid and policies to enhance credit accessibility for women entrepreneurs (Khaleque, 2018).

In the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, credit supply conditions underwent a substantial tightening, severely impacting small businesses' ability to access finance. The crisis has brought attention to the financing needs of SMEs, prompting calls for concerted efforts at both European and national levels to address issues related to working capital, create more favorable financial environments, and foster productive dialogue between governments, SMEs, and financial institutions. (Vasilescu, 2014).

Small businesses may need help developing robust management structures and internal controls, which can result in insufficient information for banks and micro-finance lenders to assess risk. To increase the likelihood of securing commercial loan financing,

implementing effective risk management systems and internal controls can benefit SMEs (Bukonya and Kinatta, 2012).

Many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) need help accessing financial resources, affecting their ability to grow and be sustainable. A recent literature review on SME financing highlights these challenges and the urgent need for better financial access to promote growth. The review also notes that despite the digital revolution in Africa, more must be done to align digital advancements with the financing needs of the informal sector, including many fashion businesses (Rao et al., 2021).

2.8.2 Poor Infrastructure

Shi, J. J., et al. (2012) observed that British and Chinese academic institutions “University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and South China Agricultural University (SCAU)” collaborated to “obtain a shared understanding of entrepreneurship education and to evaluate the effectiveness of employability and enterprise division in current fashion courses and amongst the students.” With support from the British Council, this initiative consists of a three-part “PMI2 project (Second Prime Minister’s Initiative for International Education)” in fashion entrepreneurship.

Lang and Liu (2018) discovered the preferred college support and the reasons students want to establish their own fashion firms. The study used an online open-ended questionnaire to obtain data for its qualitative research approach. Seventy-six college students were selected from a pool of fashion majors at a prominent institution in the Southeastern United States who were thinking about starting their own fashion businesses when they graduated.

Marniati and Witjaksono (2020) compared the teaching methods used in entrepreneurial courses to those used in traditional education. The results of an ANCOVA statistical analysis were compared to determine the impact of the courses on

participants' propensity to start their own businesses. The study found that students who took entrepreneurship courses performed better academically than those who took ordinary courses and that those who took entrepreneurship courses were more motivated to start their own businesses. More importantly, the fashion entrepreneurship curriculum significantly impacted both the lesson results and entrepreneurial motivation levels.

Kharnolis, M., et al. (2021) purposed to develop “Merdeka Belajar” applications for students, particularly those interested in fashion, to help them learn from their experiences in the workforce, both in the fashion entrepreneurship area and beyond.

Murzyn-Kupisz and Hołuj (2021) emphasized the importance of preparing future designers with the information and skills they'll need to adopt sustainable fashion ideas, as well as the opportunity to raise students' awareness of the problems and promise of design for sustainability. The study began with the hypothesis that there is a dearth of research into the sustainability-focused curriculum offered by Polish colleges and universities to students majoring in the fashion industry.

Hameed and Umer (2017) examined the differences and similarities between the higher education systems in Pakistan and the United Kingdom, with a focus on the subject of Apparel Design, and highlighted the many routes that lead to the various types of personnel in this profession.

Mills, C. E. (2012) focused on the relationship between design education and the creation of new businesses in the “designer fashion industry (DFI)” and offered a fresh lens through which to examine how both may be enhanced. This interpretative research utilized semi-structured interviews to gather the perspectives of tertiary educators on how they educate fashion designers about the difficulties of the DFI, as well as the enterprise development narratives of emerging fashion designers.

Jamaluddin, R., et al.(2019) investigated how teaching entrepreneurship affected students' motivation, commitment, and skill sets. After five months of research at Universiti Putra Malaysia. Undergraduates who signed up for Entrepreneurship I courses in the Fall 2016–Spring 2017 academic year were used as a sample for the study.

Sousa, G., et al. (2019) focused on helping students acquire the abilities that would be useful in their future professions as fashion designers. The results of a literature review and semi-structured questionnaires administered to the school's alumni indicate the importance of providing students with real-world experience and encouraging the development of entrepreneurial skills among the next generation of fashion designers so that they are better prepared to face the challenges of a successful career in the industry.

Lang and Liu (2017) explored the personal and environmental elements that lead college grads to embark on a new career as entrepreneurs, with the goal of pinpointing the kind of help that can best propel them forward. The research results pointed out the way for improved educational and promotional efforts to nurture fashion entrepreneurship.

Joshi and Godiawala (2013) advocated for the need to broaden the scope of entrepreneurial training and education outside traditional academic settings such as universities and colleges. The study discussed the opportunities, problems, and challenges involved in developing and delivering entrepreneurship education and training for fashion technologists, designers, and other creative professionals. The study provided some recommendations on the structure and material of such educational initiatives

2.8.3 Limited Market Exposure

Indian fashion businesses are finding ways to expand their reach and visibility despite limited market exposure through various strategic and innovative approaches. According to research findings, some essential strategies include:

Indian fashion businesses are now exploring emerging markets within the country, such as Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, as these areas are becoming new consumption centers due to their growing purchasing power and awareness. Businesses can leverage less competitive environments and higher growth potential by targeting these less saturated markets. Crafting effective market strategies tailored to these areas' local preferences and psychographics is crucial for success (Narang, 2013). Fashion businesses are relying on digital marketing to overcome market exposure limitations. Using platforms like social media, e-commerce, and digital advertising, they can reach a broader audience without needing a physical retail presence. This approach is most effective in engaging younger demographics who frequently use online channels for shopping (Mathew, 2012).

To align their offerings with the innovative preferences of fashion-forward consumers, Indian fashion businesses are focusing on fashion innovativeness and providing trendy, appealing products. By doing so, they can attract and retain customers who seek the latest styles and are willing to engage with new brands (Rahman and Kharb, 2018). Another effective strategy is developing specific business models for different market segments. For instance, fashion businesses that create targeted approaches for Tier II and Tier III cities can capitalize on these areas' unique dynamics and consumer behavior. This involves understanding local consumer aspirations and crafting marketing mixes that resonate with these audiences (Kandahar, 2018).

These strategies collectively help Indian fashion businesses enhance their market exposure and competitiveness. By adapting to local markets, embracing digital transformation, and staying ahead of fashion trends, they can effectively widen their reach and solidify their presence in the diverse Indian market.

2.8.4 Difficulty in Managing Labour and Premium Clients

Managing labor and meeting premium clients' demands present various challenges to the fashion industry, which could affect scalability and quality of service. It is crucial to have a deep understanding of these challenges, which include:

In London and New York's fashion modeling industries, aesthetic labor management requires navigating the ever-changing aesthetic trends and client demands. Fashion models must continuously adapt and package themselves according to fluctuating market trends, which can pose a significant challenge for agencies and brands aiming to maintain a consistent brand image and quality of service (Entwistle and Wissinger, 2006).

The global fashion industry involves intricate production and consumption processes that are often difficult to manage simultaneously. The challenge lies in aligning these processes effectively to meet the dynamic demands of global markets and premium clients while managing labor across different geographies (Aspers and Skov, 2006). Innovative employee management techniques that can adapt to the fast-paced and ever-evolving fashion market are often required to manage labor in fashion businesses. These techniques must address both the creative and operational aspects of the business, ensuring that labor practices evolve in line with market demands and technological advancements (Abrahamson and Eisenman, 2008).

Managing labor conditions, particularly in creative sectors such as fashion, often involves working with highly skilled yet underpaid workers who may face overwork and undercompensation. This can be challenging when attracting and retaining talent in competitive fashion hubs, where workers' happiness directly influences the quality of output and client relations (Arvidsson et al., 2010). The fashion industry's broader business environment comprises diverse teams from creative design to manufacturing,

presenting unique labor management challenges. Fashion businesses must address these challenges to ensure efficient operations and meet the high expectations of premium clients (Chavan, 2018).

Above studies help to demonstrate the multifaceted and complex challenges that fashion businesses face in managing labor and meeting the expectations of premium clients. To navigate these challenges successfully, fashion businesses must adopt effective management practices and strategic labor relations.

2.9 Summary

The above literature thoroughly explores the global and Indian fashion industries, delving into crucial aspects such as the challenges faced by these industries, the opportunities available to entrepreneurs, strategies for scaling business operations, and the integration of traditional crafts with modern business models.

The global fashion industry is depicted as a vast, interdependent ecosystem that significantly shapes economies and cultures worldwide. It is propelled by creativity, innovation, and the ever-changing demands of consumers, with fashion designers and brands continuously adapting to emerging trends influenced by cultural shifts and technological advancements. Seasonal collections showcased in significant fashion capitals maintain the industry's fast-paced nature. However, it also faces challenges such as sustainability concerns, ethical production, and the complexity of its supply chain.

In India, the fashion industry is experiencing rapid growth, presenting lucrative opportunities for entrepreneurs. The text discusses integrating modern technologies like e-commerce and AI with traditional fashion, enhancing market reach and operational efficiency. However, challenges persist, such as economic constraints, limited government support, and the need for better educational frameworks to equip future entrepreneurs with the necessary skills in design, business, and law.

Scaling fashion businesses requires significant organizational structure, management practices, and corporate culture adjustments. For effective scaling, companies need to adapt their structures for better coordination, implement efficient management systems, and foster a culture of innovation and adaptability. This is essential for maintaining sustainability and promoting growth, which includes enhancing operational efficiency, driving innovation, managing talent, improving customer experience, and implementing robust risk management practices.

The text details specific challenges fashion businesses face, such as managing labor conditions and client expectations, especially in premium segments. It also addresses the difficulties in expanding market exposure, suggesting strategies like targeting emerging local markets, enhancing digital marketing efforts, and aligning product offerings with consumer trends for better engagement.

Finally, the document underscores the need for fashion businesses to embrace innovative and sustainable business models for growth and success. This includes vertical integration to control more production stages, horizontal expansion to new markets, brand diversification, and strategic partnerships to leverage external capabilities and access new markets.

Overall, the text provides an in-depth insight into the dynamics of the fashion industry, emphasizing the need for strategic planning, adaptability, and innovation to overcome challenges and capitalize on opportunities in the global and Indian contexts.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The Methodology chapter is a critical and indispensable component of this research endeavor. It provides a comprehensive overview of the data collection process, data cleaning, preprocessing techniques, and the analytical approach employed to address the research questions and hypotheses outlined in this study. This chapter defines the systematic and rigorous methods used to collect and analyze the data, ensuring the research findings' validity, reliability, and robustness.

The data collection process was initiated by disseminating three distinct questionnaires, each targeting different stakeholders within the fashion industry: fashion business owners, fashion students and faculties, and premium clients. The researchers utilized a random sampling technique to ensure a diverse representation of respondents across various industry segments. They gathered 207 data points for Dataset 1, 195 data points for Dataset 2, and 194 data points for Dataset 3.

Upon collection, the datasets underwent meticulous data cleaning and preprocessing to rectify any inconsistencies or missing values that could compromise the integrity of the analysis. Duplicate rows and null values were identified and addressed, emphasizing imputation rather than deletion to retain the invaluable data points essential for statistical analysis. The imputation process employed the most frequent strategy and the SimpleImputer API from the sklearn. The impute module was utilized to ensure the completeness and accuracy of the datasets.

Furthermore, the ColumnTransformer API from the sklearn.compose module was leveraged to streamline the preprocessing workflow, facilitating the transformation of the datasets and the conversion of data types to accommodate subsequent analytical

procedures. Renaming columns, converting data types, and calculating column means were among the pivotal steps in preparing the datasets for inferential statistical analysis.

This Methodology chapter elucidates the systematic approach adopted to collect, clean, preprocess, and analyze the data, underscoring the commitment to methodological rigor and empirical robustness in this research endeavor. By adhering to rigorous methodological standards, this study generates insightful and actionable findings that contribute meaningfully to understanding the dynamics and challenges within the Indian fashion industry landscape.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is the overall plan or strategy used to effectively address research questions or hypotheses and achieve research objectives. It aims to ensure research findings' validity, reliability, and generalizability by providing a framework for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data. A well-designed research study follows a systematic approach that aligns with the research objectives, guiding researchers from conceptualization to conclusion. In this article, we will discuss the components of research design in detail.

The first component of research design is clearly defined research questions or hypotheses that articulate the specific aims and objectives of the study. These research questions or hypotheses guide the selection of appropriate research methods and techniques, shaping the overall direction of the research endeavor.

The research design outlines the study setting and context, providing a data collection and analysis framework. This includes defining the population or sample under study, specifying inclusion and exclusion criteria, and identifying relevant contextual factors that may influence research outcomes.

Research design encompasses the sampling strategy employed to select participants or units of analysis from the target population. It delineates the sampling method (e.g., random, stratified, convenience sampling) and justifies the choice based on the research objectives, population characteristics, and practical constraints.

The research design outlines the methods and instruments for gathering empirical evidence relevant to the research questions or hypotheses. This may involve quantitative methods such as surveys, experiments, or observational studies and qualitative methods such as interviews, focus groups, or case studies. The nature of the research objectives informs the selection of data collection methods, the type of data required, and the characteristics of the study population. Research design specifies the variables of interest and the measures used to operationalize these variables. It defines independent and dependent variables, control variables, and potential confounding variables that may impact research outcomes. It also describes the scales, instruments, or metrics employed to assess and quantify these variables, ensuring consistency and reliability in data collection.

The research design delineates the data analysis plan, outlining the statistical or analytical techniques employed to analyze the collected data and test research hypotheses. These may include descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, regression analysis, content analysis, thematic analysis, or other qualitative and quantitative methods. The data analysis plan ensures that research findings are derived systematically and rigorously, yielding valid and meaningful interpretations. Research design incorporates ethical considerations to protect participants' rights, confidentiality, and privacy. It outlines procedures for obtaining informed consent, handling sensitive information, and addressing any potential risks or harms associated with participation in

the study. Ethical guidelines and standards of conduct are adhered to throughout the research process, maintaining integrity and trustworthiness in research practices.

Research design addresses the validity and reliability of research findings by implementing appropriate measures to enhance the study's internal and external validity. This includes strategies to control for bias, minimize confounding variables, and ensure the generalizability of research findings to the broader population or context of interest.

In summary, research design serves as the blueprint for conducting a study, providing a structured framework for conceptualizing, implementing, and interpreting research outcomes. By delineating key components such as research questions, sampling strategies, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques, research design ensures methodological rigor, coherence, and integrity in the research process, ultimately facilitating the generation of valid, reliable, and actionable knowledge.

In this research study, data were collected through three distinct datasets, each targeting different stakeholders within the fashion industry ecosystem. The first dataset, comprising 207 data points, was distributed among fashion business owners. These individuals play a vital role in shaping the industry landscape, and their perspectives provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by fashion enterprises in India.

The second dataset, consisting of 195 data points, was circulated among fashion students and faculties. As future professionals and educators within the industry, their input offers unique perspectives on emerging trends, educational needs, and industry expectations. This dataset enriches the study by incorporating the voices of aspiring fashion professionals and academic experts.

The third dataset, containing 194 data points, was targeted at premium clients in the fashion industry. These clients, who represent a discerning segment of consumers, provide valuable insights into market preferences, brand perceptions, and purchasing behaviors within the fashion industry. Their feedback contributes to a holistic understanding of market dynamics and consumer preferences.

To ensure a representative sample, random sampling was employed as the sampling technique. This approach helps minimize selection bias and allows for the generalization of findings to the broader population of interest.

Data collection was facilitated through the distribution of three tailored questionnaires, each designed to capture insights specific to the respective respondent groups. Questionnaire 1 focused on gathering perspectives from fashion business owners, Questionnaire 2 targeted fashion students and faculties, and Questionnaire 3 solicited feedback from premium clients in the fashion industry.

By leveraging diverse datasets collected through targeted questionnaires and random sampling, this research aims to provide comprehensive insights into the challenges, opportunities, and dynamics within the Indian fashion industry. These datasets serve as valuable resources for analyzing trends, identifying key issues, and informing strategic decision-making within the fashion ecosystem.

3.2.1 Data Cleaning And Preprocessing

In accordance with the research design, the datasets were imported into a Python script sequentially to initiate the data cleaning process. Each dataset underwent thorough examination to identify duplicate rows and null values, ensuring data integrity and reliability. Upon detection of null values, a strategy of imputation was employed to address missing data points and preserve the completeness of the datasets.

To facilitate the imputation process, the `sklearn.impute` module was utilized to access the `SimpleImputer()` API, a powerful tool for handling missing data. The imputation strategy adopted was 'most_frequent', which involved replacing null values with the most frequently occurring value within each respective column. This approach minimized data loss and maintained the integrity of the datasets, thereby preserving the statistical power necessary for robust analysis.

Subsequently, the datasets were subjected to the `ColumnTransformer()` API, imported through the `sklearn.compose` module. This transformation facilitated the preprocessing of the datasets, preparing them for further analysis. The `ColumnTransformer()` was fitted to the data frame, enabling the systematic application of data preprocessing techniques across multiple columns or features within each dataset.

It is important to note that the decision to impute missing data instead of deleting data points was driven by the recognition of the critical importance of each data point for subsequent statistical analysis. Given the limitations imposed by the availability of data points, imputation was deemed necessary to preserve the completeness and representativeness of the datasets, thereby ensuring the validity and reliability of the research findings.

By adhering to systematic data cleaning and preprocessing procedures outlined in the research design, the integrity and quality of the datasets were upheld, laying a solid foundation for robust statistical analysis and meaningful interpretation of research outcomes.


```
[ ] from sklearn.impute import SimpleImputer
    from sklearn.compose import ColumnTransformer

    si = SimpleImputer(strategy = 'most_frequent')

    trans = ColumnTransformer(
        transformers = [
            ('imputer', si, [21,24,25,26,27]),
            ('pass', 'passthrough',[0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,22,23]),
        ]
    )
    trans = trans.fit_transform(df)
```

Figure 1 Importing the Data Set

The columns which represented the questions asked to the respondents were also renamed for the purpose of analysis.

```
import pandas as pd
columns = ['building_loyal_cust_efforts', 'rate_tech_skills_intern', 'comm_skills_intern', \
    'eff_adapting_ind_specific_task', 'overall_satis_intern_performance', \
    'age', 'experience', 'fashion_business_operational', \
    'limited_finance_aceess_chall', 'finan_resources_avail_business_growth', \
    'lack_finan_support_hindering_business_plans', \
    'infra_chall_neg_impact_scaling', 'adequacy_infra_support', \
    'poor_infra_affected_timeline', 'market_exposure_satisfaction', \
    'curr_market_expansion_strategies_effectiveness', \
    'lack_market_exposure_impact_growth', 'managing_labor_skills_difficult', \
    'difficulty_level_managing_premium_clients_relation', \
    'neg_impact_manageing_premium_clients', 'curr_profit', \
    'profit_change_one_year', \
    'leveraging_technology_operations_improvement', \
    'strategic_partnership_success', 'quality_fashion_prod_emphasis', \
    'invest_enhancing_brand_identity', \
    'opt_ss_chain_manage_for_cost_eff', 'hire_fashion_stu_intern']
df_trans = pd.DataFrame(trans, columns = columns)
```

Figure 2 Renamed for the Purpose of Analysis

Post renaming, the data types (dtype = object) of the columns which earlier contained the NaN values were converted to type integer.

```

df_trans['rate_tech_skills_intern'] = df_trans['rate_tech_skills_intern'].astype(int)
df_trans['comm_skills_intern'] = df_trans['comm_skills_intern'].astype(int)
df_trans['eff_adapting_ind_specific_task'] = df_trans['eff_adapting_ind_specific_task'].astype(int)

df_trans.info()

```

```

<class 'pandas.core.frame.DataFrame'>
RangeIndex: 207 entries, 0 to 206
Data columns (total 28 columns):
 #   Column                                                                 Non-Null Count  Dtype
---  -
 0   building_loyal_cust_efforts                                           207 non-null   object
 1   rate_tech_skills_intern                                               207 non-null   int64
 2   comm_skills_intern                                                    207 non-null   int64
 3   eff_adapting_ind_specific_task                                        207 non-null   int64
 4   overall_satis_intern_performance                                     207 non-null   object
 5   age                                                                    207 non-null   object
 6   experience                                                            207 non-null   object
 7   fashion_business_operational                                         207 non-null   object
 8   limited_finance_access_chall                                         207 non-null   object
 9   finan_resources_avail_business_growth                               207 non-null   object
10  lack_finan_support_hindering_business_plans                         207 non-null   object
11  infra_chall_neg_impact_scaling                                       207 non-null   object
12  adequacy_infra_support                                               207 non-null   object
13  poor_infra_affected_timeline                                         207 non-null   object
14  market_exposure_satisfaction                                         207 non-null   object
15  curr_market_expansion_strategies_effectiveness                       207 non-null   object
16  lack_market_exposure_impact_growth                                   207 non-null   object
17  managing_labor_skills_difficult                                       207 non-null   object

```

Figure 3 Conversion to the Required Data Type

For analysis of different variables taken into consideration for each dataset, a mean of the columns was taken. The columns (questions of the questionnaire) were assessing the same variables.

✓ DATA PROPROCESSING

```

# Group 1 - Financial Lack Resource
data_imputed['mean_finan_lack_resource'] = data_imputed[
    ['limited_finance_access_chall', 'finan_resources_avail_business_growth',
     'lack_finan_support_hindering_business_plans']].mean(axis=1)

# Group 2 - Infrastructure Lack Resource
data_imputed['mean_infra_lack_resource'] = data_imputed[
    ['infra_chall_neg_impact_scaling', 'adequacy_infra_support',
     'poor_infra_affected_timeline']].mean(axis=1)

# Group 3 - Market Exposure Lack Resource
data_imputed['mean_market_expo_lack_resource'] = data_imputed[
    ['market_exposure_satisfaction', 'curr_market_expansion_strategies_effectiveness',
     'lack_market_exposure_impact_growth']].mean(axis=1)

# Group 4 - Managing Premium Client Lack Resource
data_imputed['mean_manage_pre_client_lack_resource'] = data_imputed[
    ['managing_labor_skills_difficult', 'difficulty_level_managing_premium_clients_relation',
     'neg_impact_manageing_premium_clients']].mean(axis=1)

# Group 5 - Profitability Sec2
data_imputed['mean_profitability_sec2'] = data_imputed[
    ['curr_profit', 'profit_change_one_year']].mean(axis=1)

# Group 6 - Innovation Sec2
data_imputed['mean_innovation_sec2'] = data_imputed[
    ['curr_profit', 'profit_change_one_year', 'leveraging_technology_operations_improvement',

```

Figure 4 Processing of intended Column

Output of the above step is shown in figure 5 below.

	mean_finan_lack_resource	mean_infra_lack_resource	mean_market_expo_lack_resource	mean_manage_pre_client_lack_resource	mean_profitability_sec2	mean_innovation_sec2	mean_secti
0	2.666667	4.000000	3.333333	2.666667	2.0	2.25	
1	4.000000	4.333333	4.000000	2.666667	3.0	2.25	
2	3.000000	3.333333	4.000000	3.333333	3.5	3.50	
3	3.000000	3.333333	4.000000	3.333333	3.0	3.00	
4	2.666667	3.333333	2.666667	3.000000	4.0	3.75	

Figure 5 Mean of Considered Column

These columns were further used for performing the inferential statistics.

3.2.2 Equal Negative Impact of Challenges on Scaling Fashion Businesses in India

The main challenges faced by fashion businesses in India, namely limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, limited market exposure, and difficulty in managing labor and premium clients, exert an equally high negative impact on the scaling up of these businesses. To test this hypothesis, a method involving comparative analysis and statistical testing is proposed.

The method begins with a comparative analysis of the mean scores across all four challenges. By calculating the mean scores for each challenge, we can assess the average perceived impact of each challenge on the scaling up of fashion businesses in India. This step provides initial insights into the relative severity of these challenges.

Subsequently, the Kruskal-Wallis test is employed to compare the medians of the four challenges. This non-parametric test is suitable for comparing medians across multiple groups when the assumption of normality is violated or when the data are ordinal in nature. By applying the Kruskal-Wallis test, we can determine whether there are significant statistical differences between the median scores of all four challenges.

The outcome of the Kruskal-Wallis test will elucidate whether business owners perceive all four challenges in scaling up their businesses to have an equally hindering impact or if there are notable variations in perceived severity among these challenges. Specifically, a significant result from the test would indicate that at least one of the challenges significantly differs in its impact on the scaling up process compared to the others.

Ultimately, high median scores across all four challenges would suggest that each challenge poses a considerable obstacle to the scaling up of fashion businesses in India.

Conversely, if there are significant differences in median scores, it would imply that certain challenges are perceived to have a more pronounced effect on scaling up than others. This nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by fashion businesses can inform targeted strategies and interventions aimed at overcoming barriers to growth and fostering a conducive environment for the industry's expansion.

The testing methodology for Hypothesis 1 is a systematic process consisting of several steps to evaluate the perceived effect of various challenges on the scaling up of fashion businesses in India. A comprehensive explanation of the methodology is given below:

The owners of fashion businesses are given a structured questionnaire to fill out, which includes items related to the challenges they face while expanding their businesses. The questionnaire captures their views on limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, limited market exposure, and difficulty managing labor and premium clients.

Each challenge is rated on a Likert scale, with respondents indicating the extent to which they believe each challenge hampers scaling up their business.

The mean scores for each challenge (limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, limited market exposure, and difficulty in managing labor and premium clients) are calculated for a comparative analysis. This calculation involves adding up the ratings provided by respondents for each challenge and dividing them by the total number of respondents.

The Kruskal-Wallis test is conducted after the mean scores have been calculated to compare the medians of the four challenges. This non-parametric test assesses whether there are significant differences in the obstacles' median scores. It is suitable for ordinal data and does not assume normality.

The null hypothesis posits that there are no significant differences in the median scores of the challenges, implying that all difficulties have an equally high negative impact on scaling up fashion businesses in India.

The alternative hypothesis suggests that there are significant differences in the median scores of the challenges, indicating variations in their perceived impact on scaling up. Suppose the Kruskal-Wallis test yields a significant result ($p < 0.05$). In that case, it indicates that at least one of the challenges exhibits a significantly different impact on scaling up than the others. In this case, further post-hoc tests may be conducted to determine which specific challenges exhibit significant differences. Suppose the Kruskal-Wallis test does not yield a significant result ($p \geq 0.05$). In that case, the null hypothesis is retained, suggesting that all challenges have an equally high negative impact on scaling up fashion businesses in India.

Based on the analysis's results, conclusions are drawn regarding the perceived impact of challenges on scaling up fashion businesses in India. These findings provide valuable insights for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and researchers to develop targeted strategies and interventions to address critical barriers to growth in the fashion industry.

3.2.3 Innovative Solutions for Profitable Fashion Businesses in India

The methodology for this study involves analyzing the correlation between implementing innovative solutions and several key factors that impact business performance in the Indian fashion industry. These factors include limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, limited market exposure, difficulty managing labor and premium clients, and business profitability. Spearman's rank correlation analysis assesses the strength and direction of monotonic relationships between ordinal variables.

The data collection process involves administering surveys to fashion businesses in India. These surveys contain questions about adopting innovative solutions, the challenges companies face, and their profitability. Respondents rate their adoption of creative solutions, the severity of each challenge, and their business profitability on appropriate scales.

After collecting the data, four Spearman's rank correlations are computed to analyze the relationship between implementing innovative solutions and the four challenges mentioned earlier. The results of this analysis are then used to test the null and alternative hypotheses. The null hypothesis states no significant correlation exists between implementing innovative solutions and the four challenges. In contrast, the alternative theory suggests that implementing innovative solutions negatively correlates with each of the four challenges and positively correlates with business profitability.

The interpretation of the results is based on the correlations obtained between implementing innovative solutions and the challenges fashion businesses face. If there is a significant negative correlation between implementing innovative solutions and each challenge, it supports the idea that companies can overcome these challenges by adopting them. On the other hand, a significant positive correlation between implementing innovative solutions and business profitability suggests that businesses that adopt more creative solutions have better morale.

Finally, the study's results are used to draw conclusions regarding the relationship between implementing innovative solutions, overcoming challenges, and achieving business profitability in the Indian fashion industry. These findings provide insights into the potential benefits of innovation adoption for fashion businesses and inform strategic decision-making to improve business performance and competitiveness.

The methodology outlined for Hypothesis 2 involves Spearman's rank correlation analysis to investigate the relationships between implementing innovative solutions, overcoming challenges, and achieving business profitability within the Indian fashion industry. Here's a detailed description of each step:

1. Correlation Analysis: Spearman's Rank Correlation: Spearman's correlation coefficient (ρ) is computed to assess the strength and direction of monotonic relationships between pairs of ordinal variables. This analysis is chosen due to its robustness and ability to capture non-linear associations between variables.

- Four Spearman's rank correlations are calculated:
- Innovative Solutions vs. Limited Access to Finance
- Innovative Solutions vs. Poor Infrastructure
- Innovative Solutions vs. Limited Market Exposure
- Innovative Solutions vs. Difficulty in Managing Labor and Premium Clients

2. Hypothesis Testing: Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant correlation between implementing innovative solutions and the four challenges (limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, limited market exposure, difficulty managing labor, and premium clients).

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Implementing innovative solutions significantly negatively correlates with each of the four challenges. Additionally, there is a significant positive correlation between implementing innovative solutions and business profitability.

3. Interpretation: Negative Correlations: A significant negative correlation between implementing innovative solutions and each challenge would support the hypothesis that

fashion businesses can overcome challenges by adopting innovative solutions. This would indicate that as companies adopt more creative solutions, the severity of challenges such as limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, limited market exposure, and difficulty in managing labor and premium clients decreases.

Positive Correlation with Profitability: A significant positive correlation between implementing innovative solutions and business profitability suggests that businesses adopting more creative solutions are more profitable.

4. **Conclusion:** Based on the results of the correlation analysis, conclusions are drawn regarding the relationship between implementing innovative solutions, overcoming challenges, and achieving business profitability in the Indian fashion industry. These findings provide insights into the potential benefits of innovation adoption for fashion businesses and inform strategic decision-making to improve business performance and competitiveness.

3.2.4 Success Strategies for Profitable Fashion Businesses in India

The Indian fashion industry is a highly competitive market, and fashion businesses continually look for ways to enhance their financial performance and maintain a competitive edge. Hypothesis 3 proposes that the most effective strategies for increasing business profitability in this industry are prioritizing product quality, establishing a unique brand identity, cultivating a loyal customer base, and optimizing supply chain management.

To test this Hypothesis, a methodology involves collecting data through surveys administered to fashion businesses in India. The questionnaire captures information on four key strategic elements: product quality, brand uniqueness, customer loyalty, and supply chain management.

The data collected from the surveys is analyzed using Spearman's rank correlation coefficient. This statistical analysis is chosen due to its robustness and suitability for non-linear associations. Four Spearman's rank correlations are calculated to examine the relationships between business profitability and strategic elements.

The null Hypothesis (H0) states that there is no significant correlation between business profitability and each of the four strategic elements. The alternative Hypothesis (H1) suggests substantial positive correlations, indicating that focusing on these aspects leads to increased profitability in fashion businesses.

If a significant positive correlation between business profitability and each strategic element is found, it would support the Hypothesis that prioritizing product quality, unique brand identity, loyal customer base, and optimized supply chain management contributes to increased profitability. The findings of the correlation analysis provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of different strategies for enhancing profitability in the Indian fashion industry. Businesses can use this information to refine their strategic priorities and allocate resources more effectively.

In conclusion, the methodology used to test the Hypothesis provides a detailed understanding of the relationships between business profitability and vital strategic elements in the Indian fashion industry. The results offer practical implications for fashion businesses seeking to improve their financial performance and competitive advantage in the market.

1. Data Collection:

Surveys are distributed to fashion businesses operating in India to gather relevant data. The survey questionnaire includes items related to product quality, brand uniqueness, customer loyalty, supply chain management, and business profitability.

Respondents rate each strategic element based on predefined criteria or subjective evaluation.

2. Correlation Analysis:

Four Spearman's rank correlations are calculated to examine the relationships between business profitability and each strategic element:

- Business Profitability vs. Product Quality
- Business Profitability vs. Unique Brand Identity
- Business Profitability vs. Loyal Customer Base
- Business Profitability vs. Supply Chain Management

Spearman's correlation coefficient (ρ) is used to measure the strength and direction of monotonic relationships between pairs of ordinal variables. Spearman's correlation is motivated by its suitability for analyzing non-linear associations and ordinal data.

3. Hypothesis Testing:

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant correlation between business profitability and any of the four strategic elements (product quality, brand uniqueness, customer loyalty, and supply chain management).

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There are significant positive correlations between business profitability and each of the four strategic elements, indicating that focusing on these aspects leads to increased profitability in fashion businesses.

4. Data Analysis:

- Statistical software is used to compute Spearman's rank correlations for each pair of variables.
- The significance level is set a priori (e.g., $\alpha = 0.05$) to determine whether the observed correlations are statistically significant.

- Correlation coefficients and p-values are examined to assess the strength and significance of the relationships.

5. Interpretation: Positive Correlations: If significant positive correlations are observed between business profitability and the strategic elements, it supports the hypothesis that prioritizing product quality, unique brand identity, loyal customer base, and optimized supply chain management contributes to increased profitability.

Implications for Strategy: The findings provide actionable insights for fashion businesses, informing strategic decisions related to resource allocation and prioritization of critical areas.

6. Conclusion: Conclusions are drawn based on the results of the correlation analysis, addressing the relationships between business profitability and the strategic elements under investigation. The implications of these findings for business strategy and future research are discussed, highlighting potential avenues for improving financial performance and competitiveness in the Indian fashion industry.

3.2.5 Average Performance of Fashion Student Interns in Industry Tasks

The study investigates the perceived technical skills, communication skills, and effectiveness of fashion student interns adapting to industry-specific tasks. It assumes that these attributes are of average level. To achieve this objective, a comprehensive methodology is proposed that involves creating pie charts to represent the distribution of responses related to these variables visually.

The methodology consists of five significant steps that are briefly described below:

1. Data Collection: The first step involves the distribution of surveys or questionnaires to fashion students who have completed or are currently undergoing internships in the industry. The questionnaire includes items or statements related to technical skills,

communication skills, and effectiveness in adapting to industry-specific tasks. Respondents rate each attribute on a predefined scale (e.g., Likert scale) to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement.

2. Variable Definition: The second step involves defining the three variables of interest: technical skills, communication skills, and effectiveness in adapting to industry-specific tasks. The technical abilities variable pertains to the proficiency of fashion students in applying technical knowledge and skills relevant to the industry, such as design software proficiency, garment construction techniques, and pattern-making abilities. The communication skills variable refers to the effectiveness of fashion students in conveying ideas, collaborating with colleagues, and interacting with industry professionals through verbal and written communication. The effectiveness in adapting to industry-specific tasks variable assesses the ability of fashion students to adapt to the demands and requirements of the fashion industry, including functions related to design, production, marketing, and retail.

3. Data Analysis: The third step involves tabulating and organizing responses collected from the survey according to the variables of interest: technical skills, communication skills, and effectiveness in adapting to industry-specific tasks. For each variable, the frequency or proportion of responses for each level of proficiency (e.g., below average, average, above average) is calculated. Pie charts are created to represent the visually distributed responses for each variable. Each pie chart displays the proportion of respondents falling into different proficiency levels (e.g., below average, average, above average) for the respective attribute.

4. Interpretation: The fourth step involves analyzing the pie charts to discern patterns and trends in fashion student interns' perceived technical skills, communication skills, and effectiveness. The aim is to determine if a significant portion of respondents falls within

each attribute's "average" category. This would support the hypothesis that the technical skills, communication skills, and effectiveness in adapting to industry-specific tasks of fashion student interns are average.

5. Conclusion: The final step involves drawing conclusions based on the pie charts and data analysis findings regarding the proficiency levels of fashion student interns in technical skills, communication skills, and adaptability to industry-specific tasks. The implications of these findings for fashion education programs, internship experiences, and students' industry readiness are discussed, providing insights for potential improvements or enhancements in curriculum and training initiatives.

3.2.6 Perceptions of Practical Training and Industry Experience in Fashion Education

The objective of Hypothesis 3 is to measure the perceived technical skills, communication skills, and effectiveness of fashion student interns in adapting to industry-specific tasks, assuming that these attributes are of an average level. The proposed methodology for testing this hypothesis involves creating pie charts to represent the distribution of responses related to these variables visually.

Data Collection: We collect data by distributing surveys or questionnaires to fashion students who have completed or are currently undergoing internships in the industry. The questionnaire includes items or statements related to technical skills, communication skills, and effectiveness in adapting to industry-specific tasks. Respondents rate each attribute on a predefined scale (e.g., Likert scale) to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement.

Variable Definition: Technical Skills: This variable measures the proficiency of fashion students in applying technical knowledge and skills relevant to the industry, such

as design software proficiency, garment construction techniques, and pattern-making abilities.

Communication Skills: This variable measures the effectiveness of fashion students in conveying ideas, collaborating with colleagues, and interacting with industry professionals through verbal and written communication. **Effectiveness in Adapting to Industry-Specific Tasks:** This variable assesses the ability of fashion students to adapt to the demands and requirements of the fashion industry, including tasks related to design, production, marketing, and retail.

Data Analysis: We tabulate and organize the responses collected from the survey according to the variables of interest: technical skills, communication skills, and effectiveness in adapting to industry-specific tasks. The frequency or proportion of responses for each level of proficiency (e.g., below average, average, above average) is calculated for each variable. Pie charts are created to visually represent the distribution of responses for each variable. Each pie chart displays the proportion of respondents falling into different proficiency levels (e.g., below average, average, above average) for the respective attribute.

Interpretation: We analyze the pie charts to discern patterns and trends in fashion student interns' perceived technical skills, communication skills, and effectiveness. If a significant portion of respondents falls within the "average" category for each attribute, it would support the hypothesis that the technical skills, communication skills, and effectiveness in adapting to industry-specific tasks of fashion student interns are average.

Conclusion: Based on the pie charts and data analysis findings, conclusions are drawn regarding the proficiency levels of fashion student interns in technical skills, communication skills, and adaptability to industry-specific tasks. We discuss the implications of these findings for fashion education programs, internship experiences,

and industry readiness of students, providing insights for potential improvements or enhancements in curriculum and training initiatives.

The objective of here is to measure the perceived technical skills, communication skills, and effectiveness of fashion student interns in adapting to industry-specific tasks. The proposed methodology for testing this hypothesis involves creating pie charts to represent the distribution of responses related to these variables visually. Data is collected by distributing surveys or questionnaires to fashion students who have completed or are currently undergoing internships in the industry. Technical Skills, Communication Skills, and Effectiveness in Adapting to Industry-Specific Tasks are the three variables of interest. The frequency or proportion of responses for each level of proficiency is calculated for each variable. Pie charts are created to represent the visually distributed responses for each variable. Findings are discussed for potential improvements or enhancements in curriculum and training initiatives.

3.2.7 Client Expectations and Project Scope in the Fashion Industry

Here objective suggests a strong positive correlation between two fundamental factors for success in the fashion industry:

- The scope of the project being met
- The timeliness of delivery
- The satisfaction of client expectations

To test this hypothesis, Spearman's rank correlation analysis is the suggested methodology, which involves collecting data through surveys or questionnaires, defining key variables, analyzing the data, testing the hypothesis, interpreting the results, and drawing conclusive recommendations.

The data collection involves distributing surveys or questionnaires to clients or stakeholders engaged with fashion businesses for projects or services. The questionnaire includes:

A series of items or statements related to the perception of the extent to which the project scope was met.

- The evaluation of the timeliness of project delivery.
- The satisfaction with the overall outcome and meeting of expectations.

Respondents rate the degree to which the objectives, deliverables, and requirements outlined in the project scope were fulfilled, assess whether the project was completed within the agreed-upon timeframe and deadlines, and indicate their satisfaction with the project's outcome and whether it met their expectations.

Variable definition is the next step in the methodology, which pertains to the extent of the goals, deliverables, and requirements outlined in the project scope achieved during the project execution. This variable is called the "Scope of the Project Being Met." The second variable is "Timeliness of Delivery," referring to the punctuality and adherence to agreed-upon timelines in delivering the project or services within the fashion industry. The third variable assesses the degree to which the project's outcome aligns with the client's or stakeholder's expectations and requirements and is called "Expectations Being Met."

Data analysis is performed by tabulating and organizing the responses collected from the survey according to the variables of interest:

- Scope of the project being met
- Timeliness of delivery
- Client satisfaction with expectations being met

Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (ρ) is calculated to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables. Considering the ordinal nature of the data, the Spearman correlation analysis assesses whether there is a monotonic relationship between the variables.

Hypothesis testing is the critical step in the methodology, which involves formulating a null hypothesis (H_0) stating that there is no significant correlation between the scope of the project being met, timeliness of delivery, and client satisfaction with expectations being met. The alternative hypothesis (H_1) suggests a significant positive correlation between these variables.

Interpretation of the results involves examining the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, which indicates whether there is a significant positive correlation between the variables. If so, it supports the hypothesis that meeting project scope and delivery timeliness positively influences client satisfaction with expectations being met. The direction and strength of the correlation are interpreted to understand the magnitude of the relationship and its implications for project management and client satisfaction in the fashion industry.

Finally, conclusions are drawn based on the correlation analysis results, discussing the findings' implications for project management practices and client relationships within the fashion industry. Recommendations may be provided to enhance project scope management and ensure timely delivery to improve client satisfaction and effectively meet expectations.

3.3 Research Purpose and Questions

The Indian fashion industry has grown rapidly in recent years, with increasing numbers of entrepreneurs launching their own fashion businesses. However, many of these businesses struggle to scale up and achieve profitability due to a range of

challenges, such as limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, and difficulty in managing labour and premium clients. Additionally, the education system has not adequately prepared fashion students with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in the industry. The problem is further compounded by the lack of research on successful strategies for scaling a fashion business in India. As such, there is a need for further investigation into the challenges faced by fashion businesses in India when scaling up and strategies to overcome them, as well as the role of the education system in empowering fashion students to succeed in the industry.

Following are the research questions possible for the taken underline research:

1. What are the main challenges faced by fashion businesses in India when scaling up?
2. How can fashion businesses in India overcome these challenges and achieve profitability?
3. What are the most successful strategies for scaling a fashion business in India?
4. What is the key success factor for fashion businesses in India?
5. How education system can play a role to empower fashion students?

3.4 Population and Sample

This study aims to gather insights from various stakeholders involved in the fashion industry in India, such as fashion business owners, fashion students, faculty members from fashion institutes, and premium clients. We have employed random sampling techniques for data collection to ensure unbiased representation across different population segments.

The study comprises three datasets, each representing feedback from a specific stakeholder group. The first dataset includes responses from 207 fashion business owners, 195 inputs from fashion students and faculty members, and feedback from 194 premium clients within the fashion industry.

Inclusion criteria for the sample vary depending on the objectives of each dataset. For example, fashion business owners may include individuals who own or manage various sizes and scales of fashion enterprises. In contrast, fashion students and faculty members may be selected based on enrollment in fashion-related courses or employment at fashion institutes. Premium clients may be included based on their engagement with fashion businesses as consumers, retailers, or industry partners.

The sample size for each dataset is determined based on considerations such as statistical power, representation of diverse perspectives, and feasibility constraints. The datasets are collected through surveys or questionnaires tailored to the characteristics and roles of each stakeholder group.

The study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by fashion businesses in India and the strategies for overcoming them by including diverse perspectives from key stakeholders involved in different aspects of the fashion industry.

3.5 Participant Selection

The fashion industry in India is a vast and complex ecosystem that involves various stakeholders, including fashion business owners, fashion students, faculty members from fashion institutes, and premium clients within the fashion industry. Each of these stakeholders brings a unique perspective, and their experiences and insights are crucial in understanding the challenges and strategies involved in scaling fashion businesses in India.

Fashion business owners are entrepreneurs and professionals who manage and operate fashion businesses across India. They come from diverse backgrounds, ranging from small-scale startups to established fashion brands. Due to their experience in the industry, they possess valuable insights into the challenges and strategies involved in scaling fashion businesses in India.

On the other hand, fashion students and faculty members are students enrolled in fashion-related courses and faculty members teaching at fashion institutes in India. They possess diverse educational backgrounds, levels of experience, and areas of specialization within the fashion industry. Their perspectives provide valuable insights into the academic landscape, skill development, and industry expectations in the context of scaling fashion businesses.

Finally, premium clients in the fashion industry are individuals or entities that engage with fashion businesses as premium clients, such as retailers, wholesalers, or high-profile consumers. They possess varied preferences, purchasing behaviors, and expectations from fashion businesses. Their feedback sheds light on the demands, preferences, and satisfaction levels associated with fashion products and services in the Indian market.

The study employs random sampling techniques to ensure the unbiased representation of each stakeholder group. Questionnaires or surveys tailored to each stakeholder group are distributed through various channels, such as email, online platforms, or direct outreach. Responses are collected anonymously to encourage candid feedback and insights from participants. The sample size is determined based on statistical power, representation of diverse perspectives, and feasibility constraints.

Participants are selected based on their involvement in the fashion industry as business owners, students, faculty members, or premium clients. Inclusion criteria may

vary for each stakeholder group, considering industry experience, educational background, or engagement with fashion-related activities.

The study's rationale is to capture a comprehensive understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and strategies relevant to scaling fashion businesses in India. By including perspectives from multiple stakeholders, the study seeks to provide holistic insights that can inform policy, education, and industry practices within the Indian fashion ecosystem.

3.6 Instrumentation

Python was the primary tool used for data analysis throughout this thesis. Python is a versatile programming language widely used in various fields, including data science, statistical analysis, and machine learning. Its rich ecosystem of libraries and packages makes it well-suited for handling complex data sets and performing advanced analytical tasks.

To perform the data cleaning and preprocessing required for this analysis, Python scripts were employed to import the datasets and initiate the data cleaning. This involved checking for duplicate rows and null values within the datasets. Libraries such as Pandas were utilized to handle data manipulation tasks efficiently. For instance, Pandas DataFrames were employed to structure and organize the data for analysis.

The data cleaning process identified null values within the datasets, which must be addressed. The `SimpleImputer()` function from the `scikit-learn` library was employed to do this. The imputation strategy chosen was "most_frequent," which replaces missing values with the most frequent observation in each column.

Column transformation was also required to prepare the datasets for subsequent analysis. The `ColumnTransformer()` API was imported through the `sklearn` library, and

the compose module was utilized to transform the dataset columns. This transformation facilitated the conversion of data types and prepared the datasets for subsequent analysis.

Python scripts were developed to perform statistical analyses on the cleaned datasets. Libraries like SciPy were used to conduct inferential statistics, including hypothesis testing and correlation analysis. The findings from these analyses were then explored and presented through data visualization techniques such as pie charts, histograms, and scatter plots. Matplotlib and Seaborn libraries were employed for this purpose, offering various functions for creating informative plots, charts, and graphs.

To provide transparency and reproducibility of the analysis steps, Jupyter Notebooks, an interactive computing environment, were utilized to script and document the analysis process. Python scripts were annotated and reported within the Jupyter Notebooks to provide a clear understanding of the analysis process and ensure that others could reproduce the analysis.

Overall, Python proved to be a powerful and flexible instrument for conducting the data analysis required to address the research questions and hypotheses outlined in this thesis. Its extensive capabilities enabled data exploration, manipulation, and interpretation, ultimately generating meaningful insights and findings.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process for this thesis involved the distribution of tailored questionnaires to three specific groups within the Indian fashion industry: fashion business owners, fashion students and faculty members, and premium clients. The questionnaires were designed to gather insights and perspectives specific to each respondent group's role and experiences. They were developed based on the literature review's research objectives, hypotheses, and critical themes.

Efforts were made to reach a diverse range of fashion businesses across different industry segments, including startups, established brands, and niche designers, and clear instructions were provided to encourage participation, with respondents being assured of anonymity and confidentiality. The questionnaire for fashion students and faculty members was disseminated through educational institutions offering fashion-related courses and programs, with collaborations established with faculty members and administrators to facilitate the distribution process and encourage student participation. The questionnaire targeting premium clients was distributed through personal contacts, professional networks, and direct outreach to industry stakeholders, engaging clients representing various segments of the fashion industry, including retailers, wholesalers, and fashion influencers.

The questionnaires were circulated over a specified period, allowing respondents sufficient time to provide thoughtful and comprehensive responses, with reminders sent periodically to encourage participation and maximize response rates. Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the data collection process, ensuring compliance with ethical guidelines and standards, with informed consent from all participants, and measures were implemented to safeguard their privacy and confidentiality. Steps were taken to minimize any potential risks or discomfort associated with participation in the study.

Overall, the systematic approach employed in the data collection procedures aimed to gather rich and diverse perspectives from key stakeholders within the Indian fashion industry, with high-quality data collected essential for addressing the research objectives and hypotheses outlined in the thesis.

3.8 Data Analysis

The analysis procedure for this thesis involved several steps, each aimed at addressing specific research questions and hypotheses. The analysis used Python scripting and statistical software to explore the collected data, test hypotheses, and derive meaningful insights.

The first step involved importing the collected data into a Python scripting environment, which included loading the datasets obtained from fashion business owners, fashion students and faculty members, and premium clients. Data cleaning procedures were implemented to identify and address duplicate rows and missing values. Python libraries such as Pandas were utilized for efficient data manipulation and cleaning tasks.

Descriptive statistics were then computed to summarize the characteristics and distributions of variables within the datasets. This included calculating mean, median, mode, standard deviation, and frequency distributions. Visualization techniques, such as histograms, pie charts, and bar plots, were employed to visually represent the data and gain insights into patterns and trends.

Hypothesis testing procedures were then conducted to evaluate the validity of the research hypotheses formulated in the study. For example, a comparative analysis of mean scores and the Kruskal-Wallis test for significant statistical differences was employed to test Hypothesis 1, posing that various challenges equally hinder the scaling up of fashion businesses. Similarly, Spearman's rank correlation analysis was performed for Hypotheses 2 and 3 to examine the relationships between variables such as innovative solutions, business profitability, and successful strategies for increasing profitability.

Correlation analysis was then employed to explore the relationships between different variables within the datasets. Spearman's rank correlation coefficients were

calculated to assess the strength and direction of associations between variables such as product quality, brand identity, customer loyalty, and business profitability.

Finally, the analysis results were interpreted in the context of the research objectives and hypotheses. Key findings and insights from the analysis were summarized and reported in the thesis, along with relevant visualizations and statistical outputs. Implications of the findings for the fashion industry in India were discussed, and recommendations for practitioners, policymakers, and educators were provided based on the analysis outcomes.

Overall, the analysis procedure was structured to systematically explore the collected data, test hypotheses, and generate evidence-based insights to address the research objectives of the thesis. Rigorous analytical techniques and transparent reporting were employed to contribute valuable knowledge to the field of fashion business management in India.

3.9 Research Design Limitations

The research design of this thesis was carefully planned and executed. Still, it is essential to acknowledge the inherent limitations that might impact the interpretation and generalizability of the study findings. Some of the critical limitations include:

1. **Sampling Bias:** The use of random sampling techniques may introduce bias in the selection of participants. For instance, individuals who voluntarily participated in the study may have different characteristics or perspectives than those who chose not to. Additionally, the reliance on convenience sampling methods for distributing questionnaires may limit the sample's representativeness and lead to sampling bias.
2. **Response Bias:** Response bias may occur if participants provide socially desirable responses or intentionally misrepresent their views. The questionnaires' self-report nature

may also introduce response bias, as participants may provide answers that align with their perceived expectations or the researcher's objectives.

3. Generalizability: The study's findings may not apply to the broader population of fashion businesses, students, faculty members, and clients beyond the sampled participants. The study's focus on the Indian fashion industry may restrict the findings' applicability to other geographical regions or cultural contexts.

4. Measurement Errors: Measurement errors, including inaccuracies in data collection, coding, or analysis, may impact the reliability and validity of the study results. Despite efforts to minimize the mistakes through rigorous data cleaning and validation procedures, some measurement errors may still be present.

5. Limited Scope of Variables: The study's focus on specific variables and constructs related to scaling fashion businesses, challenges faced, and strategies employed may overlook other factors that could influence business profitability and success. Additional variables or dimensions that were not included in the analysis may have important implications for understanding the dynamics of the fashion industry in India.

6. Cross-Sectional Design: The study's cross-sectional design provides a snapshot of the data at a single point in time, which may limit the ability to draw causal inferences or assess changes over time. Longitudinal studies or experimental designs could provide more robust evidence of causal relationships and temporal changes in the investigated variables.

7. Data Analysis Techniques: While sophisticated data analysis techniques, such as Spearman's rank correlation and Kruskal-Wallis test, were employed in the study, the choice of statistical methods may have limitations in capturing the complexity of relationships among variables. Alternative or complementary analytical approaches could offer additional insights or corroborate the findings obtained through the chosen methods.

Acknowledging these limitations to ensure transparency and rigor in the research process is essential. Future studies could address these limitations by employing diverse sampling methods, incorporating multiple data sources, utilizing longitudinal designs, and employing a broader range of analytical techniques.

3.10 Conclusion

The chapter on methodology in this thesis presented a comprehensive and detailed overview of the research design, data collection methods, analysis techniques, and limitations in investigating the challenges and strategies involved in scaling fashion businesses in India. The chapter meticulously laid out each step of the research process, providing a systematic approach to address the research objectives and hypotheses outlined in the study. To explore the diverse perspectives within the Indian fashion industry, the study employed three distinct datasets obtained from fashion business owners, students, faculty members, and premium clients. The use of tailored questionnaires and random sampling techniques helped to ensure that the study gathered insights from key stakeholders across different industry segments and that the sample was representative of the population.

The data analysis procedures employed by the study were robust and involved Python scripting and statistical software. These procedures included descriptive analysis, hypothesis testing, correlation analysis, and interpretation of results. However, the study also acknowledged several limitations inherent in the research design. These limitations included sampling bias, response bias, generalizability constraints, measurement errors, and the limited scope of variables. The study recognized that these limitations may have implications for interpreting the study's findings and therefore emphasized the need for caution when interpreting the results.

In conclusion, the methodology chapter laid the groundwork for a rigorous and transparent investigation into the dynamics of scaling fashion businesses in India. The study offered valuable insights and implications for practitioners, policymakers, educators, and future research endeavors. The chapter's comprehensive overview of the research process, data collection procedures, analysis techniques, and limitations provided a detailed and informative account of the study's methodology.

CHAPTER IV:

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

Welcome to our in-depth exploration of the dynamic and ever-evolving fashion industry. This comprehensive report delves into the intricacies of various facets of the industry, from the operational nuances of fashion businesses to the demographic characteristics of business owners and their clientele. By leveraging detailed datasets, we aim to uncover the underlying trends, challenges, and opportunities that shape the landscape of fashion entrepreneurship.

Our journey begins with a meticulous examination of the industry's demographic distributions and operational histories. Through exploratory data analysis, we provide a detailed understanding of the demographic and operational characteristics of fashion business owners and clients. This includes an in-depth analysis of the typical profiles and experiences of fashion business owners, the nature of their businesses, and the characteristics of their clientele. This foundational understanding sets the stage for a deeper inquiry into the strategic aspects of managing and scaling fashion enterprises.

Subsequent sections of this report are dedicated to inferential statistical analyses, where we rigorously test multiple hypotheses to evaluate the impact of specific factors on business scalability, profitability, and customer satisfaction. We use various statistical tools and methods to assess the effects of multiple factors on business success, including innovation, quality, strategic partnerships, and education. These analyses not only highlight the pivotal roles of these factors in driving business success but also shed light on the effectiveness of the current education system in preparing industry-ready professionals.

Each section aims to elucidate the underlying patterns and insights derived from the data, helping to forge a more explicit link between industry practices, challenges, and outcomes. This chapter is pivotal in translating data-driven insights into actionable knowledge, essential for the fashion industry's strategic decision-making and policy formulation.

Through this report, we endeavor to provide stakeholders with actionable insights and evidence-based recommendations that can inform policy decisions, guide business strategies, and, ultimately, foster a more robust and sustainable fashion industry. Join us as we unpack the complexities and uncover the potential within the vibrant fashion world.

4.2 Exploratory Data Analysis

4.2.1 DATASET-1

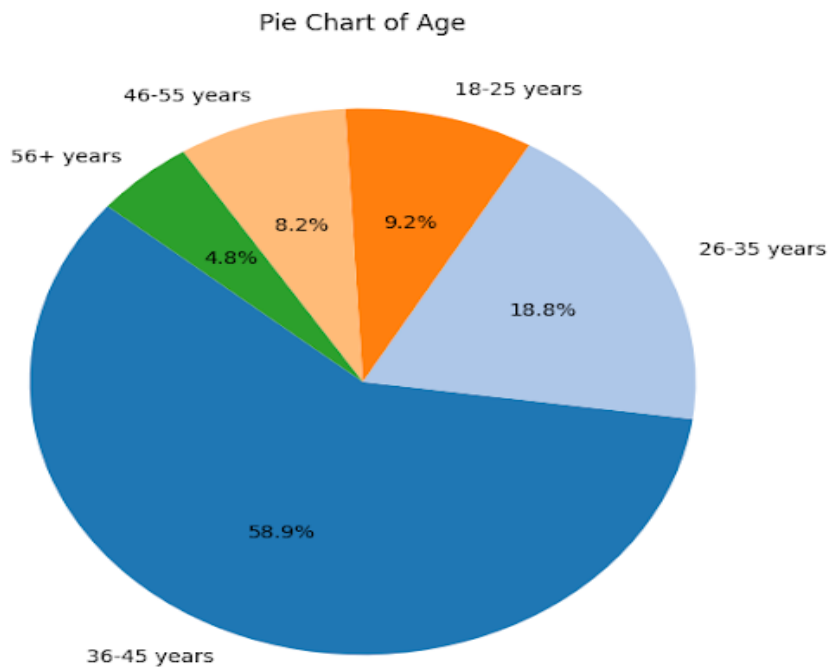


Figure 6 Pie Chart of Age

This chart illustrates the distribution of business owners' ages within the dataset. Each segment of the pie represents an age group or specific ages, depending on the data's granularity. Larger segments indicate age groups with more business owners, providing insights into the demographic makeup of the dataset's business owners.

The highest share of the business owners belonging to the age group of 36-45 years hold 58.9% within the pie-chart. Business owners belonging to the age group of 26-35 years hold the second highest share within the pie-chart.

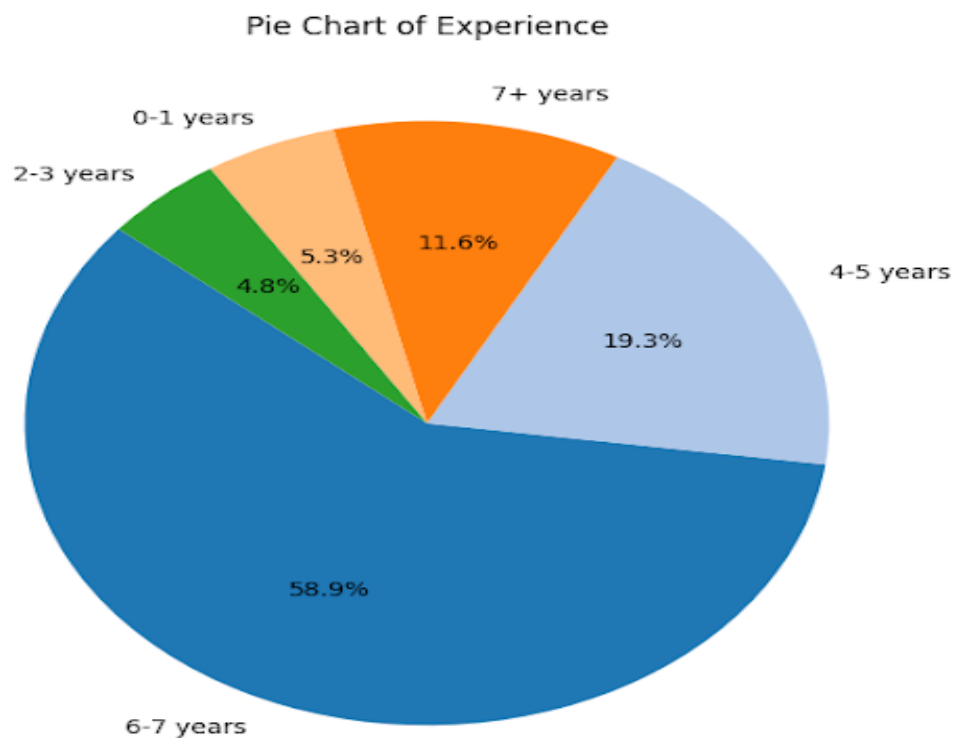


Figure 7 Pie Chart of Experience

This pie chart shows the distribution of business owners' experience levels in the fashion industry. Each segment corresponds to a range of years of experience, from novices to veterans. The visualisation helps in understanding the diversity of experience

levels among the business owners, indicating whether the dataset skews towards newer or more established entrepreneurs.

The majority of the business owners have 6-7 years of experience, thus holding 58.9% of the share within the pie chart. The second highest percentage of the owners holding 19.3% of the share within the pie chart have 4-5 years of experience.

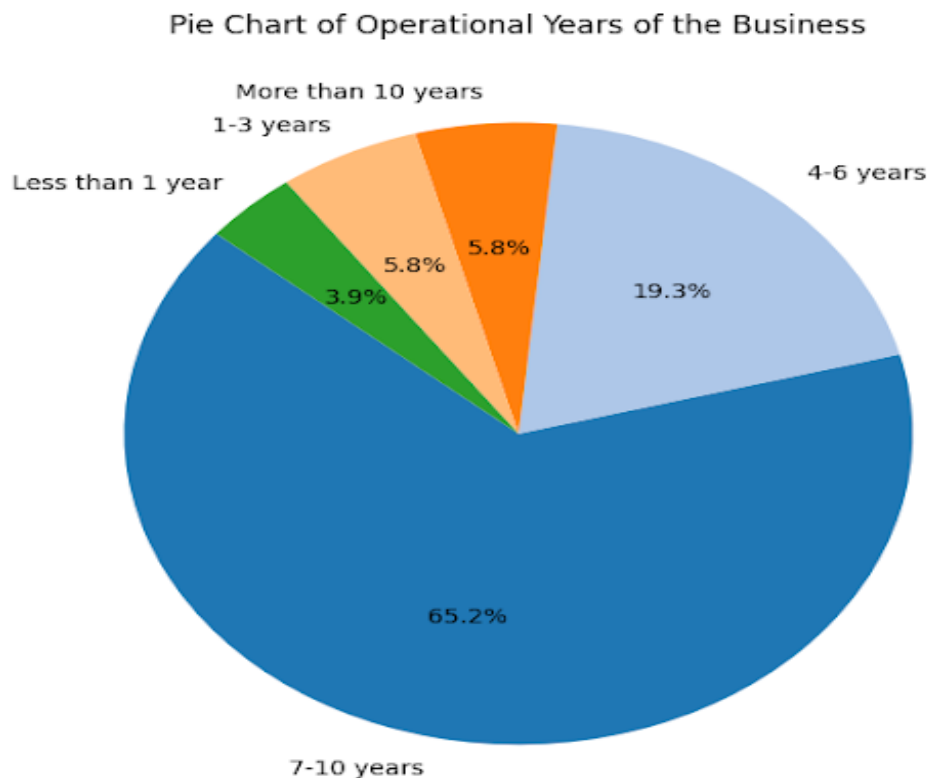


Figure 8 Pie Chart of Operational Years of the Business

The chart for 'fashion_business_operational' represents the number of years business owners' fashion businesses have been operational. This pie chart would provide a quick visual summary of how many businesses have been operational for how long. 65.2% of the business owners have their businesses operational between 7-10 years and 19.3% of the sample belongs to 4-6 years category.

After analyzing the three pie charts presented above, it is evident that the sample group under study demonstrates a mature outlook toward the variables being examined and exhibits considerable experience in the fashion industry. The charts provide a comprehensive overview of the respondents' demographics and responses to the survey questions. The data suggests that the sample group is highly representative of the target population and is suitable for further analysis. The results also indicate that the respondents possess a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the fashion industry, which could enrich the study's findings. Overall, the pie charts serve as a valuable tool to ascertain the competency and aptitude of the sample group.

4.2.2 DATASET-3

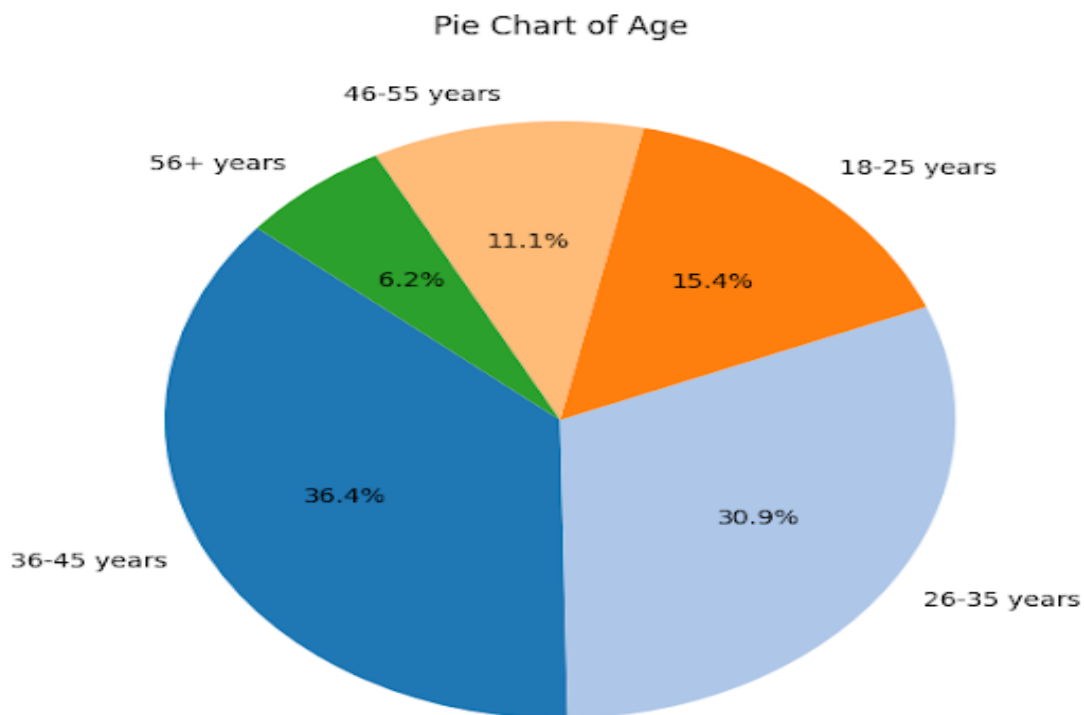


Figure 9 Pie Chart of Age Dataset 3

The pie chart for the 'age' column visually represents the distribution of clients' ages. Each segment indicates the proportion of clients within a specific age group, helping us understand the demographic spread of the client base.

Max Time Associate with Fashion Business

Pie Chart of Maximum Time Associated with Fashion Businesses

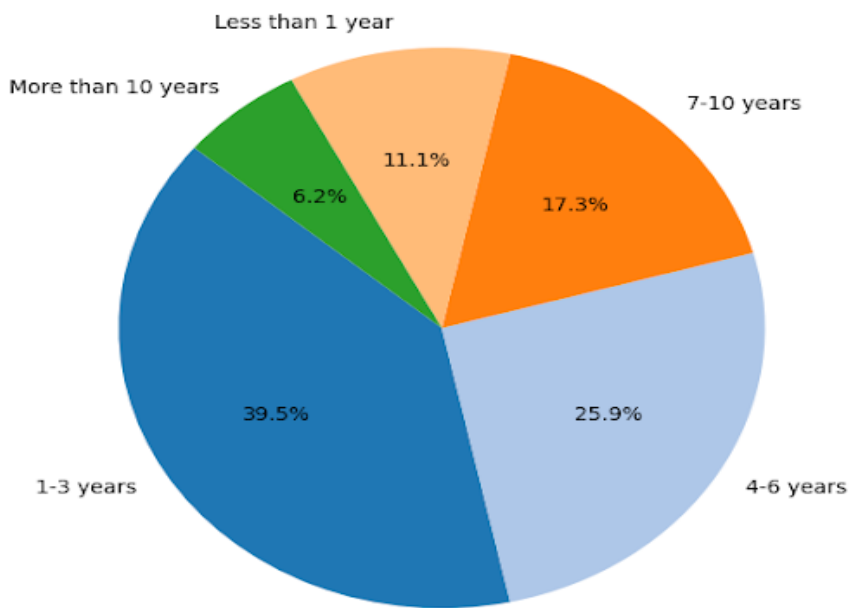


Figure 10 Pie Chart of Maximum Time Associated with Fashion Businesses

This chart shows the distribution of how long clients have been associated with the fashion business. Each segment reflects the proportion of clients according to their length of association, indicating the experience level within the industry among the client base.

Expectations Met

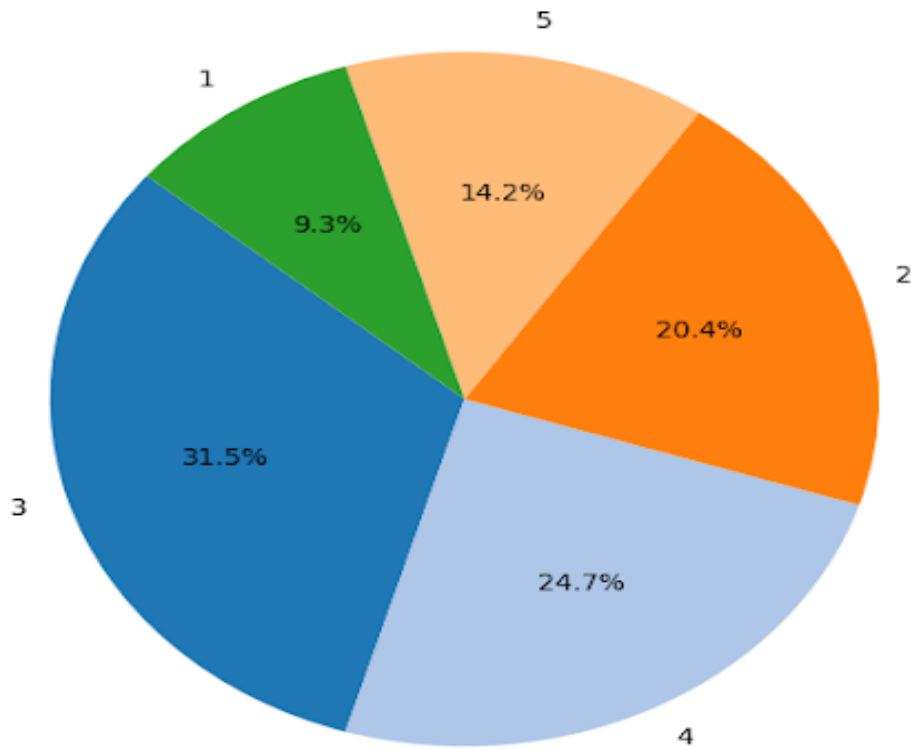


Figure 11 Pie Chart of the Expectation being met

This chart displays the distribution of clients' satisfaction levels regarding whether their expectations were met. The segments highlight the proportions of different satisfaction ratings, offering insights into overall client satisfaction.

4.2.3 Pie Charts for Deliverables

Pie Chart of Satisfaction with the Quality of the Deliverables Received Pie Chart of Satisfaction with the Quantity of the Deliverables Received

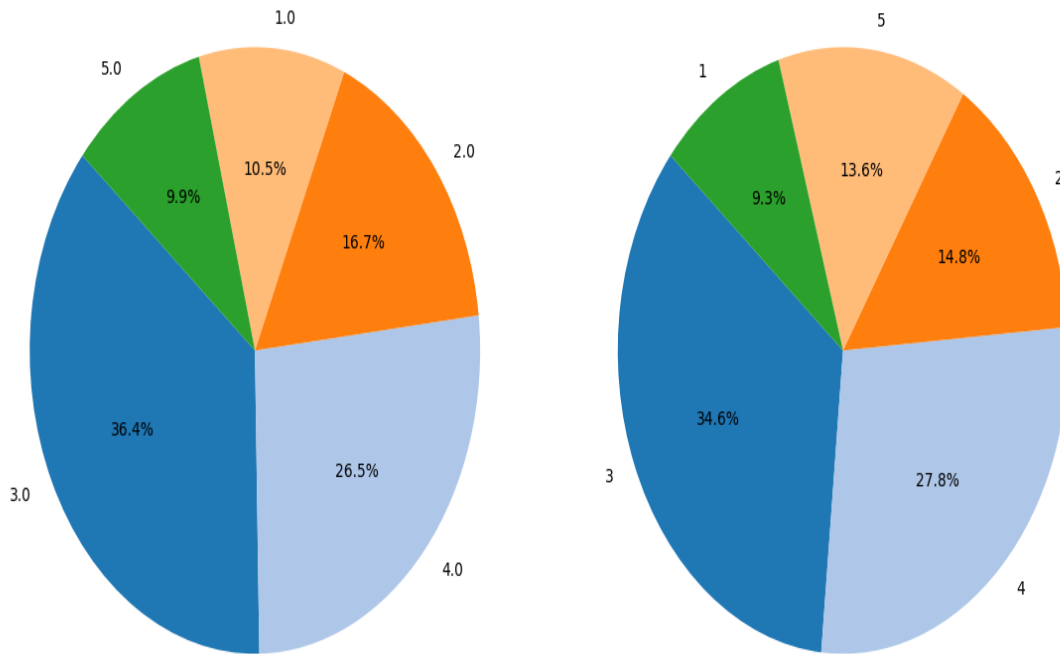


Figure 12 Deliverables Quality Received and Quantity of Deliverables Received

The pie charts presented here depict the satisfaction rate of clients regarding the quality and quantity of deliverables received. Each segment of the charts indicates the proportion of ratings given by clients, which provides an overall perception of the quality and adequacy of the deliverables. These charts serve as a tool to evaluate the effectiveness of our deliverables in meeting the needs of our clients.

4.3 Equal Negative Impact of Challenges on Scaling Fashion Businesses in India

We conducted a Kruskal-Wallis test to evaluate whether the four primary challenges hypothesized to impact scaling up fashion businesses in India negatively are equally significant. The Kruskal-Wallis test is a non-parametric statistical test used to determine if there are statistically significant differences between two or more groups of an independent variable on a continuous or ordinal dependent variable. By analyzing the data using this test, we aimed to assess the presence of any significant differences

between the groups of challenges and to determine whether they have an equal impact on scaling up fashion businesses in India.

- Results of Kruskal-Wallis Test:

In the study, a test was conducted to compare the medians of the mean values of the ratings assigned to various questions for each variable, including limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, limited market exposure, and difficulty in managing labor as well as premium clients. After analyzing the data, the p-value obtained is approximately 0.078, indicating no significant difference between the median scores of these columns at the usual 0.05 significance level. This suggests that the variables listed above do not significantly impact the study's overall outcome.

In above objective, that describes the use of Kruskal-Wallis test to evaluate the impact of four primary challenges on scaling up fashion businesses in India. The challenges are limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, limited market exposure, and difficulty in managing labor as well as premium clients. The results of the test showed that there is no significant difference between the median scores of these challenges, suggesting that they do not significantly impact the study's overall outcome.

4.4 Innovative Solutions for Profitable Fashion Businesses in India

To validate above objective, we conducted four Spearman's Rank Correlation tests to examine the relationship between the implementation of innovative solutions and the following factors: restricted financial access, inadequate infrastructure, limited market exposure, labor management difficulties, and premium client management. We also analyzed the impact of these factors on business profitability.

To prove the Hypothesis 2, we performed 4 Spearman's Rank Correlation tests between implementing innovative solutions and:

- limited access to finance

- poor infrastructure
- limited market exposure
- difficulty in managing labour as well as premium clients
- Business profitability

Results of Spearman's Rank Correlation :

Our analysis revealed several factors negatively correlated with implementing innovative solutions, including limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, limited market exposure, difficulty in managing labor, and catering to premium clients. In other words, these aspects hinder innovation. However, we also found a strong positive correlation (0.802) between innovation and business profitability, indicating that companies that score higher on innovation tend to be more profitable. In short, while some factors pose challenges to innovation, companies that can overcome these challenges and innovate successfully will likely reap significant financial rewards.

The results of four Spearman's Rank Correlation tests that analyzed the relationship between implementing innovative solutions and factors such as restricted financial access, inadequate infrastructure, limited market exposure, labor management difficulties, and premium client management. The analysis found that limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, limited market exposure, difficulty managing labor, and catering to premium clients negatively correlate with innovation. However, a strong positive correlation between innovation and business profitability indicates that companies that can overcome these challenges and innovate successfully will likely reap significant financial rewards.

4.5 Success Strategies for Profitable Fashion Businesses in India

To test above objective/hypothesis regarding the relationship between business profitability and certain factors, we conducted four Spearman's rank correlations. These

correlations were used to analyze the connection between business profitability and the following variables: emphasis on product quality, unique brand, loyal customer base, and optimized supply chain management.

We calculate 4 spearman's rank correlations to assess the relations of business profitability with:

- Emphasis on the product quality
- Unique brand
- Loyal customer base
- Opt ss chain management

Results of Spearman's Rank Correlation:

Regarding business profitability, several factors can play a role in determining success. These factors include emphasizing product quality, having a unique and recognizable brand, cultivating a loyal customer base, and optimizing supply chain management. Out of these factors, research has shown that the strongest positive correlation exists between profitability and emphasis on product quality, with a coefficient of 0.376. This suggests that businesses that focus more on product quality experience higher levels of profitability than those that do not prioritize this aspect as highly.

The text above discusses the relationship between business profitability and specific factors. To test this relationship, the author conducted four Spearman's rank correlations between business profitability and variables such as product quality, unique brand, loyal customer base, and supply chain management. The strongest positive correlation was found between profitability and emphasis on product quality, indicating that businesses that prioritize product quality experience higher levels of profitability.

4.6 Average Performance of Fashion Student Interns in Industry Tasks

The companies usually hire fashion students

Pie Chart of Ratings of technical Skills of the Interns

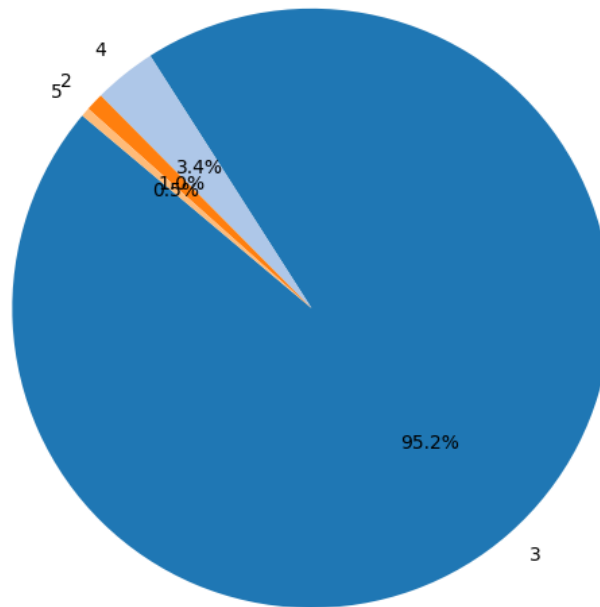


Figure 13 Chart for Rating of Technical Skills of the Interns

Pie Chart for the question 'The technical skills of the interns are excellent in nature':

This chart visualises the distribution of ratings for interns' technical skills. Each segment of the pie represents the proportion of responses for each rating level (1 to 5). A larger segment indicates a higher frequency of that particular rating. For instance, here a large portion of the pie is taken up by rating "3", it suggests that many respondents rated the interns' technical skills as 3 on a 5-point scale, implying generally neutral / average technical skills.

Pie Chart of Ratings of Communication Skills of the Interns

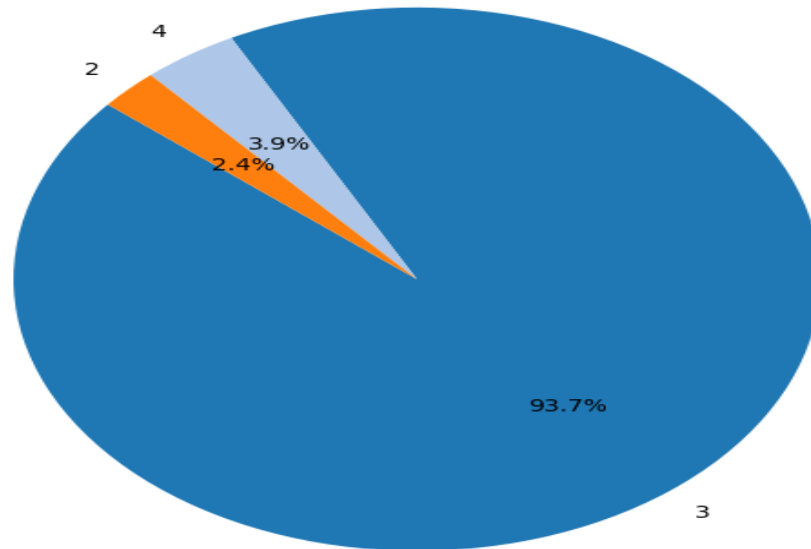


Figure 14 Chart for Rating of Communication skills of the interns

Pie Chart for 'The communication and teamwork skills of the interns are excellent in nature':

Similar to the previous chart, this one shows the distribution of ratings for interns' communication skills. It helps in understanding the perceived effectiveness of interns' ability to communicate. A balanced distribution across ratings would indicate varied perceptions, whereas a skew towards higher ratings would suggest a generally positive view of their communication skills. For eg: here, a large proportion of the pie is taken up by rating "3", it suggests that many respondents rated the interns' technical skills as 3 on a 5-point scale, implying generally neutral / average communication skills.

Pie Chart of Effectiveness of Interns in Adapting to Industry Specific Tasks

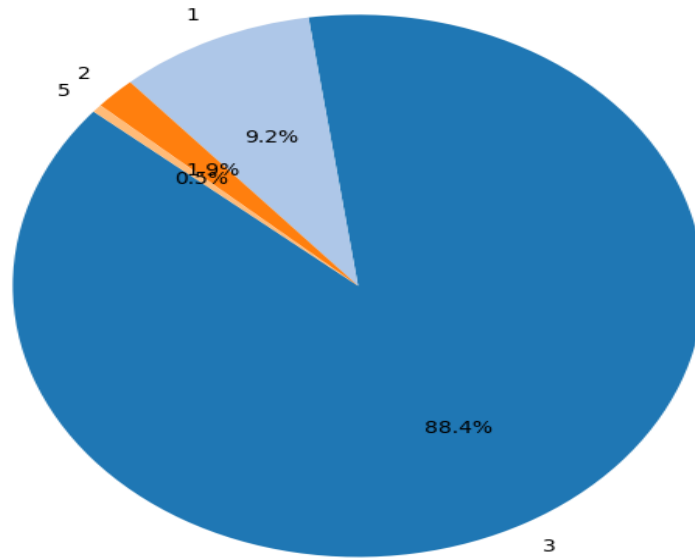


Figure 15 Chart for Effectiveness of Interns in Adapting to Industry Specific Tasks

Pie Chart for ‘Hired interns are highly effective in adapting to industry-specific tasks?’:

This chart illustrates the distribution of ratings for interns' efficiency in adapting to industry-specific tasks. It provides insight into how well interns are perceived to adjust and perform in tasks that are particular to the industry they're interning in. A concentration in higher ratings of “3” would indicate that interns are generally seen as an average adaptability to industry-specific tasks.

Pie Chart of Overall Satisfaction of the intern's Performances

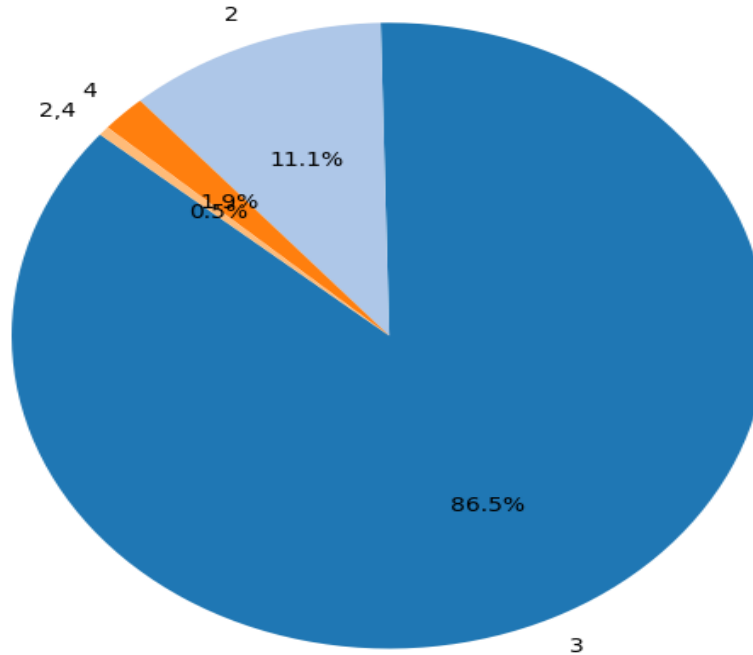


Figure 16 Chart for Overall Satisfaction of the intern's Performances

Pie Chart for the 'You are very satisfied with the overall satisfaction with the interns' performance:'

This chart represents the overall satisfaction with interns' performance, aggregating perceptions across various dimensions into a single measure. A skew towards average ratings "3" in this chart would be indicative of a generally average perception of intern performance across the board.

4.7 Perceptions of Practical Training and Industry Experience in Fashion Education

Fashion students and faculties alike believe that practical training is crucial in empowering students to succeed in the fashion industry. The hands-on experience gained through practical training allows students to hone their skills and develop their sense of style, essential for standing out in the competitive fashion world. Additionally, practical

training provides opportunities for students to establish connections within the industry, which can be invaluable when seeking internships or job opportunities after graduation. Overall, the perception among fashion students and faculties is that practical training is integral to preparing students for success in the fashion industry.

`SignificanceResult(statistic=0.4685648124433482, pvalue=4.913390435723149e-12)`

The passage examines the correlation between the perceived importance of practical training and the role of education in helping students establish industry connections. Using Spearman's Rank Correlation, the mean column of questions related to practical training and industry networking yielded a correlation coefficient of about 0.469 with a p-value of 4.91e-12. This suggests a moderate positive correlation between the two factors, indicating that students who value practical training also tend to value networking opportunities facilitated by their educational institutions. Additionally, the correlation is statistically significant, further supporting the notion that practical training and networking opportunities go hand in hand. In a separate study, the author analyzed the relationship between business profitability and various factors, including product quality, unique brand, loyal customer base, and supply chain management. The results showed that the strongest positive correlation existed between profitability and a focus on product quality, indicating that companies prioritizing product quality tend to experience higher levels of profitability.

The perception of providing practical training, Industry Networking, and Real-World Experience is more skewed towards the higher end, i.e, students and faculties believe that these are important.

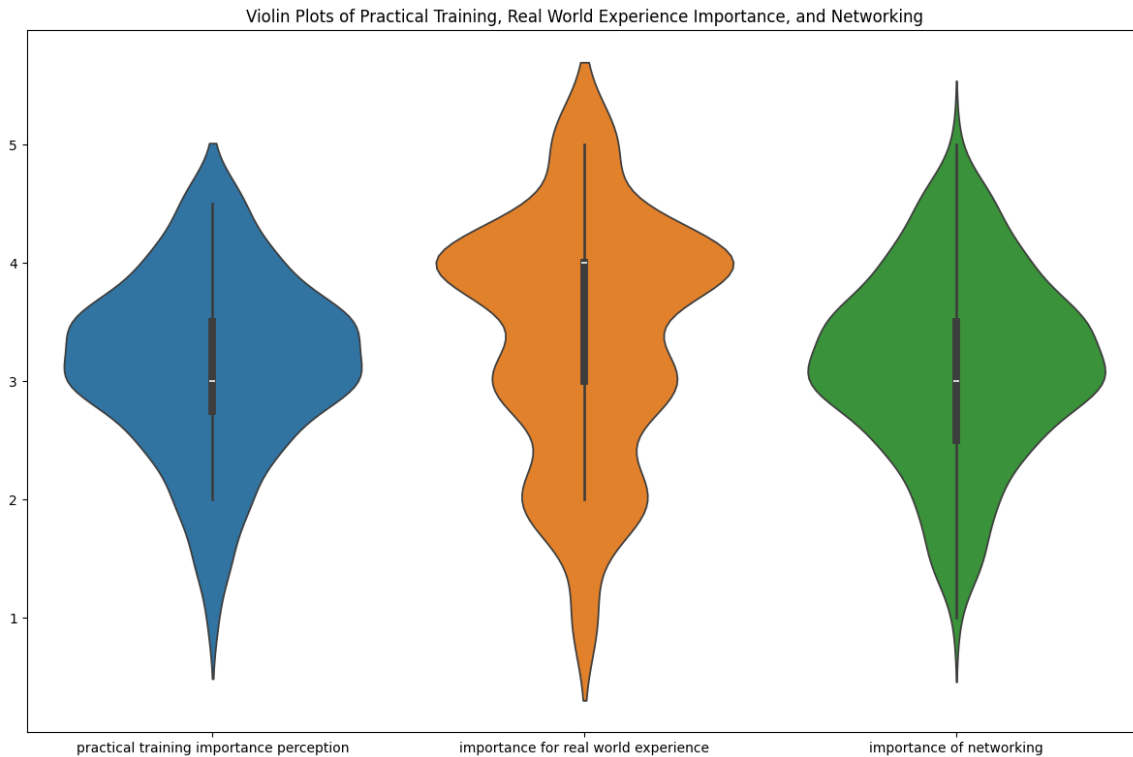


Figure 17 Plot Showing Practical Training, Real World Experience Importance and Networking

The violin plots provided in figure 17 visually represent perceptions of three key factors in the fashion industry: the importance of practical training, real-world experience, and networking. Each plot's shape and distribution offer insights into how these aspects are valued among respondents.

The plot for practical training shows a broad base with a slight concentration around the higher end, indicating a general trend towards valuing practical training highly. The plot for the importance of real-world experience is the widest, suggesting a diverse range of opinions but a notable consensus on its high importance. Lastly, the networking plot also indicates high value among respondents, with a slight tapering at the lower ratings. Overall, these plots underscore the significance of hands-on experience and connections in the fashion industry as perceived by the participants.

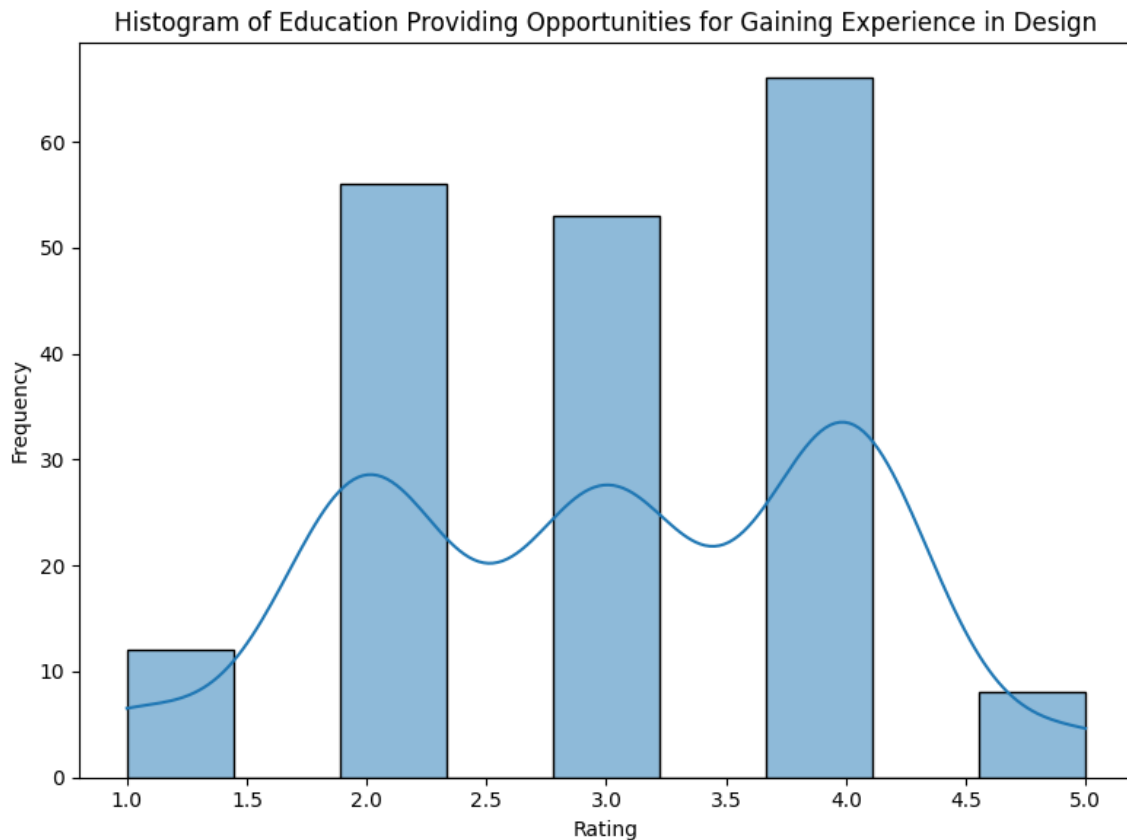


Figure 18 Histogram of Education for gaining Experience in Design

The histogram depicts the frequency of various ratings given by respondents when evaluating the extent to which educational institutions provide opportunities for gaining experience in design. The x-axis represents a five-point rating scale, with 1 indicating the lowest level of opportunity and 5 the highest. The y-axis indicates the number of responses (frequency) for each rating.

From this histogram, several key points emerge:

The distribution has two primary peaks at ratings 2 and 4, suggesting that experiences are polarized. A significant number of respondents feel that the opportunities provided are either somewhat insufficient (rating 2) or quite adequate (rating 4).

The peak at rating 4 is the highest, indicating that the most common perception is one of satisfaction with the opportunities for gaining experience. This could suggest that many educational programs have effective components of experiential learning in design.

The relatively lower frequency at rating 3, which would indicate a neutral position, shows that respondents tend to have a more definitive opinion rather than a neutral one.

The lower frequencies at the extreme ends (rating 1 and 5) imply that very few respondents find the opportunities to be either entirely inadequate or exceptionally comprehensive.

The curve overlaying the histogram indicates the distribution's skewness and central tendency. It appears to have a slight skew towards the higher ratings, indicating a lean towards positive evaluations. However, the presence of a significant number at rating 2 prevents a definitive conclusion of overall satisfaction.

The absence of a continuous increase or decrease from one end of the scale to the other indicates that the respondents do not collectively trend towards one extreme in their opinions. Instead, there's a notable variance, pointing to the existence of diverse experiences and perceptions among the respondents.

This distribution suggests a complex picture: while many respondents acknowledge the presence of design experience opportunities within their educational curriculum, a considerable number also perceive these opportunities as insufficient. These points towards a potential gap in the education system's ability to consistently provide comprehensive practical experiences in design, indicating areas that might benefit from further development or enhancement to meet student needs more uniformly.

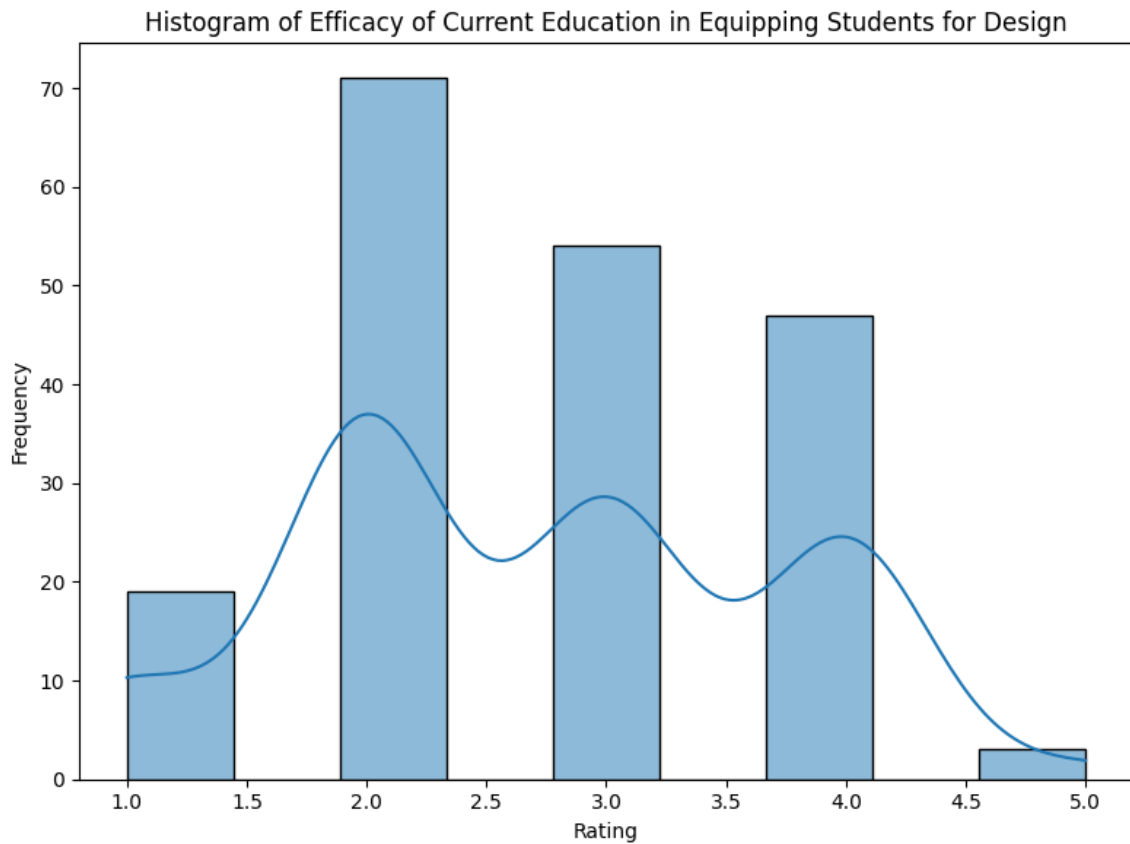


Figure 19 Histogram of Efficacy of Current Education in Equipping Students for Design

The histogram illustrates the responses of individuals assessing the efficacy of current education systems in equipping students for careers in design. Here’s a detailed breakdown of what the distribution of frequencies across the rating scale tells us:

Prominent Peak at Rating 2: The tallest bar at rating 2 suggests that the majority of respondents find the current education system somewhat ineffective in preparing students for design roles. This indicates critical feedback, possibly pointing towards a gap in the curriculum or practical training opportunities.

Significant Frequency at Rating 3: A substantial number of individuals rate the efficacy of education as neutral. This could imply that while some aspects of the education system are satisfactory, others might be lacking, resulting in an overall average assessment.

Moderate Peak at Rating 4: The presence of a notable peak at rating 4 indicates that there is also a significant perception of the education system being quite effective in equipping students with the needed design skills. This reflects a segment of the population that is content with the current state of design education.

Low Frequencies at Ratings 1 and 5: The low frequencies for the extremes show that very few respondents feel the education system is completely failing or excelling. This absence of extreme views suggests that the perceived effectiveness of design education is not polarized to the highest degree.

Skewness and Central Tendency: The curve overlaid on the histogram shows a slight skew towards the lower end of the rating scale, indicating a general tendency towards viewing the current educational offerings as less than ideal for equipping design students. However, since the curve peaks at 2 and then again, less prominently at 4, this suggests a bimodal distribution where opinions are divided.

The interpretation of this histogram highlights a critical need for introspection within design education. The responses suggest that while some students find the educational offerings beneficial, a significant proportion feel under-equipped. This dichotomy can be indicative of inconsistencies in the quality or relevance of design programs across various institutions, or it may reflect differing expectations and needs among the student body.

The insights from this histogram are invaluable for educational administrators, curriculum developers, and policymakers who aim to enhance the quality and effectiveness of design education, ensuring that it meets industry demands and prepares students for successful careers in design.

These plots help students see how their peers rate the importance of practical training, real-world experience, and networking. They show both the range of responses

and the most common ratings. One plot, called a "violin plot," helps students see how their peers rate these factors. Another plot, called a "histogram," shows how students rate the opportunities their education provides for gaining experience in design. The plot shows how often each rating was given, giving insights into students' views on experiential learning opportunities in their design education. There is no consensus among the respondents, with variation seen in the responses. The majority of respondents do not believe that the education system efficiently equips students with the necessary skills and knowledge in design.

4.8 Client Expectations and Project Scope in the Fashion Industry

The current education system does not provide opportunities for students to gain real-world experience in design, production, marketing, and entrepreneurship and it is not effective in equipping fashion students with the necessary skills and knowledge in design, production, marketing, and entrepreneurship.

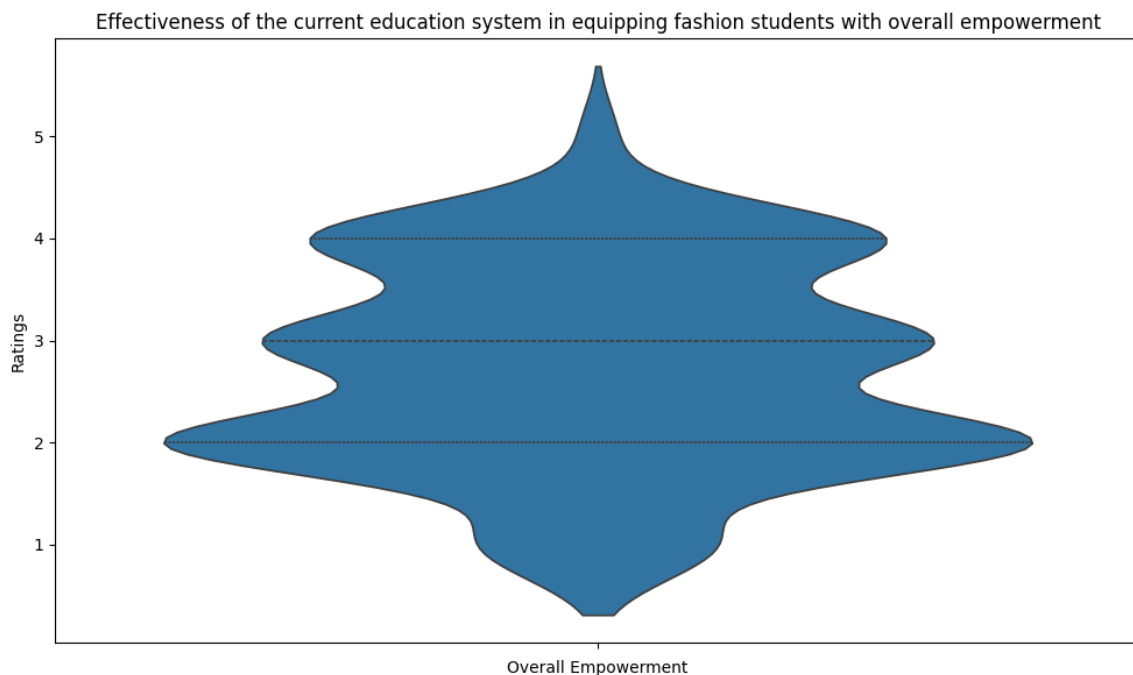


Figure 20 Effectiveness of Current system for Fashion Students for overall empowerment

Violin Plot Structure:

The plot's vertical orientation indicates the ratings scale from 1 to 5 on the y-axis, which corresponds to the level of effectiveness from lowest to highest.

The width of the plot at different points on the y-axis indicates the frequency of responses for each rating level. Wider sections mean more responses, while narrower sections mean fewer.

The thickest part of the violin represents the most common range of ratings given by the students. The thin points at the top and bottom of the violin suggest fewer students giving extreme ratings (very low or very high effectiveness).

Analysis and Inference:

Central Ratings: The widest part of the violin is around the middle rating levels (2-4), which suggests that most students' and faculties' opinions on the effectiveness of their education in equipping students for the fashion industry fall within this range.

Peaks and Troughs: There are multiple peaks and troughs, indicating that there's no single rating that overwhelmingly dominates the responses. This suggests variability in how students perceive the effectiveness of their education.

Skewness: There's a slight skew towards the higher ratings (3-4), indicating a tendency towards a positive assessment of the current education system's effectiveness.

Tail at the Bottom: The long, narrow tail stretching down to the lowest rating indicates that a smaller group of students rated the education system's effectiveness as very low.

Top of the Violin: There is a slight bulge near the top rating of 5, indicating a subset of students who believe the education system is highly effective in empowering them.

Interpretation: The overall shape of the violin plot suggests a moderate level of effectiveness in the current education system from the respondents' perspective. The presence of multiple peaks indicates that students have a range of opinions, with no single rating being predominant. The fact that the violin is widest in the middle suggests that students generally feel somewhat empowered, but there is room for improvement, especially since there's a significant bulge towards the lower ratings. The education system appears to be effective for some, as indicated by the bulge near the top, but there are clearly respondents who feel that the system could do more to prepare and empower students for careers in the fashion industry.

The key takeaway might be that while the current education system is providing a satisfactory level of empowerment to fashion students, there are significant numbers of students at both ends of the spectrum, suggesting the need for a more tailored approach to address the diverse needs and perceptions among the student and faculty bodies. Enhancing areas that contribute to empowerment, such as practical skills development, industry exposure, and modernised curricula, could help improve these ratings.

the scope of the project being met and the timeliness of the delivery within the fashion industry while dealing with the business are strongly positively correlated with the expectations being met of the client

Spearman's Rank Correlation:

The correlation between 'Are the expectations being met?' and 'How well is the scope of fashion projects communicated and met by the business?' is approximately 0.526, with a p-value of 5.56e-13, indicating a moderate positive correlation that is statistically significant. This suggests that clearer communication of product scope by businesses is associated with higher levels of expectations being met among clients.

The correlation between ‘Are the expectations being met?’ and ‘How satisfied are you with the timeliness of deliverables from the fashion business?’ is approximately 0.661, with a p-value of 7.20e-22, showing a strong positive correlation that is also statistically significant. This indicates that the timeliness of deliverables plays a significant role in meeting clients' expectations.

4.9 Summary of Findings

This results chapter presents an in-depth analysis of the fashion industry, covering various aspects such as demographics, operational characteristics, client engagement and satisfaction, education system evaluation, inferential statistics, and hypotheses testing. The findings suggest that business owners in the fashion industry are primarily within the 36-45 age range, possess 6-7 years of experience, and are likely to be operational for 7-10 years. The age distribution of clients is captured, providing an overview of the target market demographics that fashion businesses are catering to. There is varying satisfaction with the opportunities for practical experience in design provided by educational institutions. A significant division in opinion regarding the efficacy of current education in equipping students for design roles emerged, with a substantial number suggesting that the education system could better prepare students for the real-world demands of the fashion industry.

The Kruskal-Wallis test indicated no significant difference in the impact of common challenges on scaling up fashion businesses, suggesting that these issues may be of similar concern across the board. Spearman's rank correlations highlighted strong positive relationships between innovative strategies and business profitability. Emphasis on product quality and brand identity emerged as critical factors associated with success. A moderate positive correlation was found between the value placed on practical training

and networking opportunities, underscoring their perceived importance in empowering students for the fashion industry.

Violin plots showed that the majority of respondents consider practical training, real-world experience, and networking crucial, but they also highlight areas for potential enhancement. The distribution of ratings concerning the education system's effectiveness in design indicates a need for improvement in equipping students with the necessary skills, particularly emphasizing the practical application of their learning.

Overall, the findings suggest a complex picture of an industry that is both established and in flux, with areas of strength in experience and longevity juxtaposed with critical gaps in education and training. The insights derived from this analysis can guide future research, inform policy and curriculum development, and ultimately contribute to the strategic advancement of the fashion industry. The results suggest a call to action for educational institutions to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry requirements, ensuring that the next generation of fashion professionals is well-equipped to navigate and innovate in this vibrant sector.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the fashion industry and highlights its operational, experiential, and educational aspects. The findings suggest that the industry is mature and experienced, but it also faces challenges that require strategic attention.

One of the challenges faced by the industry is the age demographic of business owners, which suggests that the workforce is seasoned. While this provides experience and stability, it could hinder innovation if the businesses don't adapt to changing conditions. The lifespan of these businesses also suggests that younger entrepreneurs face barriers to entry.

On the client side, the data shows that the fashion industry has loyal customers, but there is room for improvement in meeting their expectations. Fashion businesses rely on meeting and exceeding customer demands, which remains a key growth area.

The findings also reveal a clear divide in perceptions of the effectiveness of current education systems in equipping students with practical design skills. While some institutions excel, there is a significant call for a more consistent and pragmatic approach to design education, suggesting an overhaul in curriculum design and pedagogy.

The analysis did not find a significant difference in the impact of various challenges on scaling up fashion businesses, pointing to a shared struggle across different obstacles. However, the relationship between innovative solutions and profitability indicates a path forward. Emphasis on product quality, brand uniqueness, and customer loyalty stand out as beacons for strategic focus.

The relationship between practical training, networking opportunities, and empowerment is also essential for those embarking on a fashion career. Real-world skills and industry connections are not merely beneficial but essential.

Visual narratives like violin plots and histograms offer intuitive insights into the industry's participants' collective psyche. These visualizations affirm the importance of practical training, real-world experience, and networking, yet they also spotlight the variances and nuances within these areas.

In conclusion, the fashion industry needs to embrace change, adopt innovative strategies, and foster a new generation of talent through education as dynamic as the industry it serves. This chapter sets the agenda for future transformations necessary to sustain and grow in an industry characterized by relentless change and boundless creativity.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the findings presented in the results chapter, considering their implications for the fashion industry and design education. Our approach involves a critical examination of the data and a reflection on the intricate interplay between business practices, educational strategies, and industry trends.

We will delve into the layers of operational insights, evaluating the maturity of business owners in the context of a competitive and rapidly evolving industry landscape. By exploring client relationships, we will explore the importance of customer satisfaction metrics and the significance of surpassing client expectations in an industry that values experience and perception.

Our discussion will also focus on the pivotal role of education in shaping future industry leaders. Using histograms and violin plots, we will identify gaps and strengths that will form the basis of a conversation on how educational institutions can better equip students with the necessary design skills and industry knowledge.

In addition, we will interpret the significance of our statistical findings, examining the reasons behind the lack of significant differences in the challenges faced by fashion businesses and the strong correlations between innovation and profitability.

We will also highlight the importance of networking and practical training in developing a well-rounded professional, emphasizing the need for academia and the industry to foster environments that nurture these elements.

Ultimately, we aim to move beyond mere numbers and percentages, engaging with the stories and strategies they represent. This discussion chapter seeks to bridge data

and action, theory and practice, challenging us to consider the future of the fashion industry and the role education plays in shaping it.

Embarking on an in-depth exploration of the dynamic and ever-evolving fashion industry, this comprehensive report delves into the intricacies of various facets of the industry, from the operational nuances of fashion businesses to the demographic characteristics of business owners and their clientele. By leveraging detailed datasets, we aim to uncover the underlying trends, challenges, and opportunities that shape the landscape of fashion entrepreneurship.

Our analytical journey commences with a meticulous examination of the industry's demographic distributions and operational histories. Through exploratory data analysis, we provide a detailed understanding of the demographic and operational characteristics of fashion business owners and clients. This includes an in-depth analysis of the typical profiles and experiences of fashion business owners, the nature of their businesses, and the characteristics of their clientele. This foundational understanding sets the stage for a deeper inquiry into the strategic aspects of managing and scaling fashion enterprises.

5.2 Discussion of Equal Negative Impact of Challenges on Scaling Fashion Businesses in India

The Kruskal-Wallis test provided an essential insight into the scaling challenges fashion companies face in India. According to the test, there is no significant statistical difference in the negative impacts of the four primary challenges fashion businesses face: limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, limited market exposure, and difficulty in managing labor and premium clients. The p-value of approximately 0.078 suggests that this outcome raises several discussion points that require further examination.

Understanding the Equal Footing of Challenges: The lack of significant differences among these challenges implies that these obstacles hinder the scaling of fashion businesses across the industry. Therefore, the impact is equal, which suggests that fashion entrepreneurs face a multifaceted barrier to growth, and it does not prioritize one issue over another. This outcome indicates that a comprehensive approach to solutions is necessary rather than targeted interventions.

Financial Access: Limited access to finance is a common challenge that affects the ability to scale, particularly for small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Growth requires capital to invest in new technologies, expand product lines, and enter new markets. The equal weight of this issue may reflect a widespread difficulty in accessing loans, investment, and other forms of financial support, which could be attributed to stringent lending criteria, lack of collateral, or the perceived riskiness of the fashion sector by financial institutions.

Infrastructure Constraints: Poor infrastructure, including logistics, supply chain management, and production facilities, can severely limit a business's ability to scale. The Indian fashion industry's infrastructure may be hampered by outdated technology, inefficient supply chains, and inadequate logistics networks, leading to higher costs and reduced global competitiveness.

Market Exposure: Limited market exposure, another challenge tied to impact, speaks to the difficulties fashion businesses face in reaching a wider audience. Challenges in marketing, entering new geographical areas, and the digital divide may be more pronounced for smaller firms. The lack of significant market presence can severely restrict a brand's growth potential, particularly with the rise of digital platforms and e-commerce.

Labor and Client Management: Managing labor effectively and catering to premium clients require distinct skill sets and resources that can be significant challenges, particularly when trying to scale. In a labor-intensive industry like fashion, skilled craftsmanship is essential, and difficulties in managing this can affect product quality and production capacity. Similarly, meeting the high expectations of premium clients is vital for maintaining brand reputation and securing repeat business.

Broader Implications: The finding that these challenges are equally impactful suggests that interventions to aid the scaling of fashion businesses in India must be multifaceted. Industry stakeholders may need to advocate for more supportive policies from the government, such as more accessible access to finance, improvements in infrastructure, initiatives to enhance market exposure, and programs for skill development. Moreover, this finding indicates that fashion businesses may benefit from a comprehensive strategy that simultaneously addresses all of these areas. For instance, investing in digital infrastructure could enhance market exposure and improve supply chain management. Upskilling the labor force not only improves production efficiency but could also lead to product innovation, catering to the tastes of premium clientele.

In conclusion, the finding that these challenges are similar in their impact on business scaling in India invites a holistic and integrated approach to problem-solving. It prompts a consideration of systemic changes that could alleviate these issues collectively, suggesting that addressing one without the others may not be sufficient for meaningful progress. This realization is a call to action for industry leaders and policymakers to forge collaborative pathways to surmount these barriers and catalyzes growth in the Indian fashion sector.

5.3 Discussion of Innovative Solutions for Profitable Fashion Businesses in India

The fashion industry in India has been thriving, but businesses need to adopt innovative solutions to stay competitive and profitable. Studies have shown that there is a strong correlation between innovation and profitability in the industry. Companies that use new and creative approaches in their business practices are more likely to succeed financially.

Innovation can take different forms, such as adopting new technologies, creating unique products, developing new business models, or using unique marketing strategies. For example, using technology can lead to cost reduction and efficiency improvements and help businesses reach global markets. Sustainable and ethical fashion is also on the rise, and companies can innovate by embracing traditional eco-friendly materials and practices while communicating their commitment to international audiences.

Marketing strategy innovation can also help increase reach and resonate more effectively with target audiences. Indian fashion businesses that are agile and ready to experiment with new approaches can tap into new revenue streams and build brand loyalty.

However, there are also barriers to innovation, such as resistance to change, lack of funding, or fear of failure. Overcoming these barriers requires a culture shift within organizations where experimentation is encouraged and failure is seen as a learning opportunity.

In conclusion, innovation is essential for the long-term success of fashion businesses in India. Fashion businesses can remain competitive and thrive by embracing new technologies, sustainable practices, unique business models, and innovative marketing. The findings suggest a clear call to action for industry veterans and

newcomers: investing in innovative practices as a cornerstone for long-term profitability and success.

The correlation between innovation and profitability within the Indian fashion industry. Spearman's Rank Correlation tests show that innovation is a critical driver of financial success in this industry. Innovation can take many forms, including technological advancements, sustainable and ethical fashion, unique business models, the integration of tradition with modernity, and innovative marketing and consumer engagement strategies. However, there are also challenges to innovation, such as resistance to change and lack of funding. The text suggests that investing in innovative practices is essential for long-term profitability and success in the Indian fashion industry.

5.4 Discussion of Success Strategies for Profitable Fashion Businesses in India

The analysis of correlation targeting successful strategies for profitable fashion businesses in India provides valuable insights into the factors that can boost profitability. Based on the findings, the discussion emphasizes the importance of product quality as the most significant factor influencing profitability. It also explores how various elements, such as crafting excellence, leveraging heritage, building a brand identity, storytelling, cultivating a loyal customer base, personalization, optimizing supply chain management, and technological integration, are intertwined to form a robust business strategy in the Indian fashion landscape.

Emphasis on Product Quality: The study shows that product quality is pivotal in defining a fashion brand's success. In a market where brand reputation and trust are crucial, consistent quality assurance can lead to repeat purchases, premium pricing capability, and positive word-of-mouth. Therefore, fashion businesses should pay

meticulous attention to materials, craftsmanship, design innovation, and stringent quality control processes to meet and exceed customer expectations.

Crafting Excellence: Crafting excellence means delivering products that are unique, authentic, and of the highest quality. For Indian fashion businesses, this means leveraging the country's rich textile heritage to create modern designs that appeal to contemporary tastes. By modernizing traditional fabrics and techniques, companies can differentiate themselves from their competitors and develop a blend of quality and culture that is hard to replicate.

Building a Unique Brand Identity: Creating a compelling narrative that resonates with customers is essential for differentiating a fashion business in a crowded marketplace. Indian fashion businesses have an advantage in this regard, thanks to their diverse culture, fashion, and customer preferences. Companies can foster a sense of belonging and engender customer loyalty by telling artisanal stories, highlighting sustainability efforts, and promoting innovative design philosophies.

Cultivating a Loyal Customer Base: Loyalty is a critical factor driving repeat business and fostering an emotional connection between customers and a brand. To cultivate loyalty, Indian fashion businesses must focus on personalized services, reward programs, and community building. Companies can establish trust and credibility with their customers by delivering on the promise of authenticity and originality in design.

Personalization: Personalization is an effective strategy for tailoring the shopping experience to individual customer preferences. Indian fashion businesses can offer customized sizing, design alterations, and exclusive previews of new collections to foster stronger bonds with their customers.

Optimizing Supply Chain Management: An optimized supply chain is crucial for profitability. By streamlining operations, businesses can respond quickly to market

changes, manage inventory more efficiently, and reduce operational costs. Technologies like AI, blockchain, and ERP systems can help companies achieve supply chain transparency and efficiency.

Overcoming Barriers to Strategy Execution: Despite the known correlations, executing these strategies can be challenging due to resource constraints, market volatility, or operational inefficiencies. To overcome these barriers, businesses need to balance strategic foresight, operational excellence, and continual adaptation to market trends.

Policy and Educational Support: Government policies supporting industry growth and education programs focusing on modern business practices can create an environment conducive to successfully implementing these strategies.

In conclusion, the study highlights that profitability in the Indian fashion industry is a multifaceted achievement that requires a cohesive integration of various factors, including quality, brand uniqueness, customer loyalty, and supply chain optimization. By focusing on these interrelated facets, businesses can create a sustainable competitive advantage and succeed in the Indian fashion market.

5.5 Discussion of Average Performance of Fashion Student Interns in Industry Tasks

The analysis of the performance of fashion student interns in industry tasks highlights the pivotal role of internships in bridging the gap between academic learning and practical industry experience. Pie charts illustrating the performance ratings of interns on various competencies reveal a trend towards average ratings, with many respondents assigning a score of "3" on a 5-point scale. This section delves into the nuances behind this trend and discusses the implications for the fashion industry and education providers.

Technical Skills: Many respondents rated interns' technical skills, which form the cornerstone of their practical abilities, as neutral/average. This finding raises questions about the effectiveness of current fashion education curricula in equipping students with the necessary technical competencies.

Curriculum Relevance: Rapid technological advancements and changing trends characterize the fashion industry. It's essential that the educational curriculum keeps pace with these changes and provides students with hands-on experiences that reflect current industry practices.

Bridging Theory and Practice: The disparity in ratings may also reflect a disconnect between theoretical knowledge and practical application. There may be a need for a more integrated approach to learning that combines classroom instruction with real-world practice.

Communication and Teamwork Skills: The average ratings for communication and teamwork skills suggest that while students are not lacking in these areas, there is room for improvement. In the collaborative and often fast-paced fashion industry environment, these soft skills are crucial for success.

Industry-Academia Collaboration: Enhancing soft skills may require a closer collaboration between industry and academia, where students are exposed to real industry dynamics through mentorship programs, industry-led workshops, and on-the-job training.

Soft Skills Development: Including modules focused on communication, leadership, and teamwork within fashion courses could also foster the development of these essential skills.

Adaptability to Industry-Specific Tasks: The interns' average adaptability to industry-specific tasks indicates a need for a more tailored educational approach. Interns

are performing at a basic level of competency but might be struggling with more nuanced, specialized tasks.

Specialized Training: More specialized training within education programs may be necessary to prepare students for the specific tasks they will encounter in their internships and future careers.

Continuous Feedback: Creating a system of continuous feedback during internships can help students understand their performance levels and areas that need improvement, leading to better adaptability.

Overall Satisfaction with Intern Performance: The general satisfaction with intern performance aligns with the average ratings across specific skill sets. While interns meet basic expectations, the lack of higher satisfaction ratings implies that interns do not need to consistently exceed expectations.

Setting Clear Expectations: Educational institutions and industry partners may need to set clear expectations for intern performance and provide the necessary support and resources to help interns excel.

Real-World Experience: Increasing opportunities for students to gain real-world experience through internships, live projects, and industry engagements can elevate their performance and preparedness for the workforce.

Policy Implications: The findings suggest that policymakers and educational institutions should revisit internship programs and curricula. Ensuring that students have the technical skills, soft skills, and adaptability required by the industry is critical for their success and the fashion industry's growth.

In conclusion, the average performance ratings of fashion student interns indicate that while the foundations are in place, there is significant potential for enhancement. The discussion calls for a collaborative effort between the fashion industry and educational

institutions to ensure that internships are not just a formality but a transformative stage for students, equipping them with the comprehensive skills needed to thrive in the fashion industry. By doing so, the industry can harness the full potential of its future workforce, and education providers can deliver on their promise of real-world readiness.

5.6 Discussion of Perceptions of Practical Training and Industry Experience in Fashion Education

The Spearman's Rank Correlation results have revealed the perceived significance of practical training and industry experience in fashion education. They indicate a moderate positive correlation with students and faculty valuing these elements as essential to career preparation. This has significant implications for the fashion industry, the education sector, and students aspiring to enter the fashion world.

The findings highlight a consensus that practical training is a fundamental component of a comprehensive fashion education. However, there is often a gap between theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom and the practical skills demanded by the industry. Therefore, educational institutions may need to enhance their curricula to include more practical components such as workshops, studio work, and live projects, allowing students to apply theoretical concepts in real-world scenarios.

Collaborating with fashion houses and businesses can provide students with internship opportunities, mentorship, and exposure to day-to-day operations, which can be instrumental in understanding the practical aspects of the industry. This can also help develop professional connections that serve as a crucial pathway to employment and career development.

Fashion programs could expand beyond traditional internships to include networking events, guest lectures by industry professionals, and alum mentorship

programs. These opportunities allow students to build their professional networks even before graduation.

Exposure to real-world challenges and industry dynamics can prepare students for the complexities of the fashion market. Involvement in live projects requiring students to work on business problems or collaborate with fashion brands can simulate the industry environment, providing invaluable practical experience.

The perceived importance of practical training and industry exposure in fashion education reveals a widespread acknowledgment of the benefits of such exposure, not just in understanding the current state of the fashion market but also in fostering adaptability and innovation. Therefore, fashion education might benefit from emphasizing experiential learning, where students can gain firsthand experience in various aspects of the industry, from design and production to marketing and retail.

By aligning educational outcomes with industry needs, academic institutions can play a pivotal role in addressing the skills gap in the fashion industry. Continuous feedback from industry stakeholders can help develop a curriculum, ensuring the training provided is current with the latest industry practices and technologies.

In conclusion, the discussion highlights the importance of practical training and industry experience as perceived by stakeholders in fashion education. Therefore, educational programs must evolve to incorporate practical, hands-on learning opportunities that align closely with industry requirements. This can help cultivate the technical and creative skills necessary for the fashion industry and build the professional networks often critical to launching successful careers. For its part, the fashion industry can actively contribute to shaping the educational landscape by offering expertise, mentorship, and practical opportunities to the next generation of fashion professionals.

5.7 Discussion of Client Expectations and Project Scope in the Fashion Industry

A recent study's findings regarding the correlation between the scope of fashion projects, effective project management, and client satisfaction are highly significant. The study highlights the crucial role of clear communication, efficient project management, and meeting client expectations in the fashion industry. In this discussion, we will delve into the intricacies of these relationships and explore strategies for enhancing client engagement and ensuring project success in the ever-evolving and competitive fashion world.

The Spearman's Rank Correlation revealed a moderate positive correlation (0.526) between the clarity with which the scope of fashion projects is communicated and the degree to which client expectations are met. This underscores the significance of clear, concise, and transparent communication as a foundational element in client relations.

Establishing initial expectations is critical to the success of any project. This involves a detailed discussion with clients to understand their needs, preferences, and desired outcomes. Fashion businesses can benefit from using visual aids, prototypes, and thorough project briefs to ensure that both parties have a mutual understanding of the project scope.

Maintaining open lines of communication throughout the project lifecycle is equally essential. Regular updates, meetings, and check-ins can inform clients of progress and any issues that may arise, allowing for timely interventions and adjustments.

Effective project scope management is pivotal in meeting client expectations. It involves setting accurate and achievable goals and meticulously managing any changes or deviations from the original plan. Scope creep—the expansion of a project beyond its initial plans—can lead to delays, increased costs, and client dissatisfaction. Implementing

strict change management processes and ensuring changes are approved, documented, and communicated effectively can mitigate these risks.

Adequate resource allocation based on the project scope ensures that all necessary materials, labor, and time are available. Resource management can also help meet deadlines and improve project quality.

The correlation between client satisfaction, the timeliness of deliverables, and meeting expectations (correlation of 0.661) highlights the critical role of timely delivery in client satisfaction. This is particularly important in the fashion industry, where trends and seasons play a significant role in the relevance of the product.

Streamlining workflows through efficient process management can enhance the ability to meet deadlines. This might include adopting project management software, improving team coordination, and refining production techniques.

Proactively managing potential delays by planning for contingencies and buffer times within project timelines can prevent last-minute scrambles and ensure smoother project execution.

Advancements in technology can significantly improve communication and project management. Project management software, CRM systems, and digital communication platforms can enhance coordination, improve record-keeping, and streamline operations.

Investing in training for project managers and client-facing staff in the nuances of effective communication, negotiation, and client management can lead to better handling of client interactions and project execution.

In conclusion, meeting client expectations in the fashion industry heavily depends on how well the project scope is communicated and managed. Businesses that excel in these areas will likely see higher levels of client satisfaction and repeat business.

Implementing structured communication strategies, meticulous project management practices, and leveraging modern technology is critical to enhancing the ability to meet and exceed client expectations, fostering long-term success in the competitive landscape of fashion.

5.8 Summary of Results

This extensive discussion has delved into various critical areas that significantly impact the fashion industry. It has focused on both the internal factors that define the success of fashion businesses in India, such as operational practices, and external factors, such as client interactions. The discussion has generated vital insights that can serve as a roadmap for emerging and established fashion businesses to navigate the industry's complexities effectively.

One of the major takeaways from this discussion is that the challenges of limited access to finance, poor infrastructure, limited market exposure, and difficulty in managing labor and premium clients have an equally negative impact on scaling fashion businesses. Therefore, adopting a holistic approach to address these barriers is essential. This approach should involve policy changes and strategic business adaptations that enhance scalability and growth.

The discussion has also highlighted the strong positive correlation between innovation and profitability in the fashion industry. To drive efficiency and differentiation, fashion businesses must embrace new technologies, sustainable practices, and unique business models. Innovation not only aligns with global trends towards sustainability and ethical fashion but also opens up new markets and opportunities for growth.

Furthermore, the discussion highlighted critical success strategies for profitable fashion businesses, such as product quality, unique brand identity, customer loyalty, and optimized supply chain management. These factors contribute to a robust business model that enhances customer satisfaction and operational efficiency, ensuring long-term success in a competitive market.

The discussion has also shed light on the average performance of fashion student interns in industry tasks, highlighting the need for education systems to align more closely with industry needs. Enhancing practical training, increasing industry exposure, and fostering soft skills are essential for preparing students to meet the high standards of the fashion industry.

The discussion has emphasized the critical role of practical training and industry networking in fashion education. Establishing strong connections with the industry and integrating real-world experiences into the curriculum is essential to enhancing student preparedness and employability.

Effective management of project scope and client expectations through clear communication and meticulous project management practices was identified as crucial for meeting client expectations. Timeliness in project delivery and proactive management of potential delays were highlighted as vital for achieving client satisfaction.

In conclusion, this discussion has underscored the interconnectedness of various aspects of running a fashion business. The insights from the discussion call for an integrated approach where innovation, strategic management, and client-centric practices converge to drive profitability and sustainability. For educational institutions, aligning curricula with the evolving industry standards and increasing practical training opportunities are imperative.

CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

India's fashion industry has a unique blend of traditional artistry and modern innovation, which has helped it make significant progress on the global stage. The industry has undergone a revolution due to the emergence of e-commerce and advancements in technology, such as 3D printing and AI, alongside the influence of social media. However, despite these advancements, access to finance, complex supply chains, and the need for governmental support remain challenges that hinder growth and innovation.

The global fashion industry is dynamic and expansive, significantly impacting economies and cultures worldwide. It is characterized by its fast-paced nature and driven by continuous shifts in consumer demands and rapid changes in trends facilitated by digital media. Consumer awareness and regulatory pressures have become increasingly crucial for sustainability and ethical practices.

Scaling operations is vital for the growth and sustainability of fashion businesses. The thesis discusses the importance of adapting organizational structures, evolving management practices, and fostering a positive corporate culture to manage scaling effectively. An organization's scalability is not just about expansion but also involves enhancing operational efficiency, nurturing innovation, and maintaining a strong customer focus to support long-term growth.

Successful fashion enterprises rely heavily on strategic branding and effective market positioning. The thesis explores how branding influences consumer perceptions and loyalty, which are crucial for competitive differentiation and market success. The

impact of consumer experience, satisfaction, and brand authenticity on building solid brand-customer relationships is highlighted through studies cited in the thesis.

The thesis addresses the dual aspects of the opportunity and challenge of international expansion. While global market entry offers growth potential, it also involves navigating complexities such as cultural differences, regulatory challenges, and logistical issues. E-commerce is presented as a strategic tool to overcome some traditional barriers to international market penetration, allowing brands to reach a wider audience more efficiently.

The research explores various business models that facilitate scaling in the fashion industry, including vertical integration, horizontal expansion, brand diversification, franchising, and strategic partnerships. The thesis analyzes each model's potential to address specific business goals and market conditions, underscoring the importance of selecting the right strategy to enhance market presence and ensure sustainable growth.

The thesis also delves into the cultural and economic factors that affect entrepreneurial ventures in the fashion industry. It discusses the role of social and cognitive capital in entrepreneurship, emphasizing how these elements influence the formation and success of business networks and ventures, particularly among different demographic groups within India.

The thesis concludes by synthesizing the findings from various studies to present a nuanced understanding of the complexities of the fashion industry in India and globally. It underscores the need for a robust support system, including educational reforms to prepare future entrepreneurs and better strategic interventions to facilitate growth and innovation in the sector.

To sum up, this thesis comprehensively analyzes the challenges and strategies associated with scaling fashion businesses in India, set against the backdrop of the global fashion industry. It offers valuable insights into the operational, strategic, and cultural dynamics that influence the industry, providing a roadmap for current and future entrepreneurs to navigate the complexities of fashion entrepreneurship.

6.2 Implications

The implications of the research conducted in this thesis on the fashion industry in India are multifaceted, affecting various stakeholders, including entrepreneurs, educators, policymakers, and the broader business community. Here are the critical implications derived from the study:

1. Implications for Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders

Strategic Decision-Making: Entrepreneurs need to be adept at navigating the complexities of scaling businesses. The study emphasizes the importance of strategic branding, market differentiation, and leveraging digital technologies to enhance local and global competitiveness.

Adoption of Sustainable Practices: Given the increasing consumer demand for sustainability, fashion businesses are encouraged to adopt eco-friendly practices across their supply chain. This aligns with global trends and enhances brand reputation and customer loyalty.

Innovative Business Models: The research highlights various scalable business models such as vertical and horizontal expansion, franchising, and partnerships. Entrepreneurs should consider these models to determine the best fit for their business objectives and market conditions.

2. Implications for Educational Institutions

Curriculum Development: Educational institutions must revamp their curriculum to better prepare students for the challenges of the fashion industry. This includes integrating courses on digital marketing, sustainability, global fashion management, and entrepreneurial skills.

Industry Collaboration: Fashion schools should increase collaboration with industry practitioners to provide students with real-world experiences and networking opportunities. This can enhance students' practical skills and improve their employability.

3. Implications for Policymakers

Supportive Regulatory Framework: Policymakers should work towards creating a more supportive regulatory environment that facilitates easy access to finance, encourages startups, and supports sustainable practices in the fashion industry.

Promotion of Traditional Crafts: There is an opportunity to promote India's traditional crafts globally, leveraging them as a unique selling proposition. Policies aimed at preserving these crafts while integrating them with modern designs can help position India distinctly in the global fashion market.

4. Implications for the Fashion Industry Globally

Cultural Exchange and Global Market Penetration: Insights from the Indian fashion industry can offer lessons on integrating traditional craftsmanship with modern fashion, which can be adapted by other countries aiming to globalize their local fashion industries.

Adaptation to Rapid Market Changes: The global fashion industry can learn from India's responsiveness to consumer preferences and the rapid adoption of new technologies. This adaptability is crucial for staying relevant in a fast-evolving market.

5. Implications for Sustainable Business Practices

Environmental Responsibility: The emphasis on sustainability in the thesis underscores the importance of adopting environmentally responsible practices. This has implications for the entire industry, from raw material sourcing to manufacturing and distribution.

Consumer Awareness and Engagement: Educating consumers about sustainability and ethical fashion is essential for shifting market dynamics towards more sustainable consumer behaviors.

6. Long-term Strategic Implications

Building Brand Equity: The research stresses the importance of building a solid brand image and deep customer relationships. Long-term strategies should focus on building brand equity through quality, innovation, and customer engagement.

Leveraging Technology for Competitive Advantage: Utilizing advanced technologies such as AI, 3D printing, and big data analytics can provide significant competitive advantages in product customization, trend forecasting, and efficient supply chain management.

In essence, this thesis not only provides a comprehensive overview of the current state of India's fashion industry but also sets a foundation for future research and action, highlighting the critical areas for development to ensure the growth and sustainability of the fashion sector. These insights are crucial for driving strategic changes and fostering an environment that supports the fashion industry's dynamic needs.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

The research conducted on India's fashion industry has provided comprehensive insights. However, many avenues of investigation can be explored to enhance our understanding further and support this dynamic sector's continuous growth. To that end,

here are several recommendations for future research that can extend the insights gained from this thesis:

1. Detailed Studies on Consumer Behavior

Future studies could focus on specific consumer demographics within India to understand varying preferences, spending habits, and responsiveness to trends across different age groups, regions, and socio-economic statuses. Additionally, research into how deep-seated cultural traditions influence modern fashion choices in India could provide valuable insights for designers and marketers to create more culturally resonant products.

2. Impact of Technological Advancements

As digital platforms continue to transform shopping behaviors, detailed studies on the impact of e-commerce on traditional retail and consumer experiences in the fashion industry would be beneficial. Investigating the adoption and benefits of emerging technologies like AI, VR, and sustainable manufacturing technologies in fashion design and production processes could guide efficiency improvements and innovation.

3. Sustainability Practices and Their Efficacy

Assessing the long-term impact of sustainable practices adopted by Indian fashion businesses could help understand their effectiveness and guide future environmental policies. Further research could also explore consumer attitudes towards sustainability in fashion, including willingness to pay more for sustainable products and the influence of sustainability on brand loyalty.

4. Globalization and Market Expansion

More detailed studies on the challenges and strategies for Indian fashion brands looking to expand internationally could help craft better market entry strategies.

Comparative research between India and other emerging markets could uncover unique strategies or challenges that could benefit international fashion market strategies.

5. Policy Impact and Governmental Support

Research evaluating the impact of government policies on the fashion industry's growth and sustainability could provide feedback for policy refinement. Studies focusing on the effects of infrastructural improvements on fashion industry supply chains could guide future investments and policy formulations.

6. Educational Programs and Industry Preparedness

Investigating the alignment between the curricula of fashion education institutions and industry needs can highlight areas for educational enhancement. Research into the effectiveness of practical training and internship programs in preparing students for the fashion industry would be valuable for curriculum development.

7. Cultural Heritage and Modern Fashion Fusion

Studies focusing on innovative approaches to integrating traditional crafts with modern fashion could help revive and preserve these crafts while making them relevant in contemporary markets. Additionally, domestically and internationally, research on effective marketing strategies for traditionally inspired fashion items could boost sales and global appreciation.

8. Brand Development and Competitive Strategy

Detailed case studies of successful Indian fashion brands and their strategies could serve as blueprints for emerging brands. Additionally, studies on the competitive dynamics within the Indian fashion industry could help new entrants and existing businesses better position themselves in the market.

These recommended areas for future research combine deepening existing knowledge with exploring new territories. Each area has the potential to significantly

contribute to the strategic development, operational efficiency, and global competitiveness of India's fashion industry.

6.4 Conclusion

The Indian fashion industry is a vibrant and dynamic sector that has garnered significant attention due to its rich blend of traditional craftsmanship and modern innovations. In recent years, extensive research has shed light on the challenges and opportunities facing stakeholders in this industry, revealing several key conclusions.

One of the most crucial takeaways from this research is the importance of strategic adaptation and technological integration. As the global fashion industry evolves rapidly, fashion entrepreneurs must embrace digital transformations to stay competitive and responsive to the ever-changing consumer demands. By leveraging technology, fashion businesses can enhance their operational efficiencies, improve their marketing strategies, and reach consumers domestically and globally.

Another essential theme from the study is the need for sustainability in the Indian fashion industry. With growing consumer awareness of ethical practices, fashion brands are called to prioritize sustainability as a core component of their brand identity. This shift towards sustainable practices is essential for the industry's long-term viability and aligns with the global trend towards environmental stewardship in the fashion industry.

Moreover, the research has highlighted significant gaps in the educational support for aspiring fashion entrepreneurs. Educational institutions urgently need to update and expand their curricula to include more practical, technology-driven, and business-oriented training. This would better equip graduates with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in the modern fashion industry and foster a new generation of innovative and savvy fashion entrepreneurs.

Finally, the study emphasizes the importance of supportive governmental policies and infrastructure that facilitate growth and innovation in the fashion sector. Effective policy frameworks can enhance access to finance, streamline regulatory processes, and promote the international expansion of Indian fashion brands.

In conclusion, the Indian fashion industry has enormous potential for growth and global influence. To achieve this potential, stakeholders must collectively push towards the strategic goals of leveraging technology, embracing sustainability, enhancing educational frameworks, and advocating for supportive policies. As the industry moves forward, it will be crucial to maintain the delicate balance between preserving rich cultural heritage and adopting new trends and technologies that resonate with global consumers.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY COVER LETTER

Questionnaire for Fashion Business Owners:

- Demographic Information:

- o Age Group:

- 18-25 years
- 26-35 years
- 36-45 years
- 46-55 years
- 56+ years

- Years in the Fashion Industry:

- 0-1 years
- 2-3 years
- 4-5 years
- 6-7 years
- 7+ years

- Business Details:

- o How long has your fashion business been operational?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- More than 10 years

Section 1: Assessing Challenges in Scaling Up:

- Finance:

- a. Limited access to finance has been a challenge for scaling up your business?

- o Strongly Disagree
- o Disagree
- o Neutral
- o Agree

- o Strongly Agree
- b. Rate the availability of financial resources for your business's growth.
 - o Highly Available
 - o Available
 - o Neutral
 - o Unavailable
 - o Highly Unavailable
- c. Lack of financial support has hindered your business expansion plans.
 - o Strongly Disagree
 - o Disagree
 - o Neutral
 - o Agree
 - o Strongly Agree

• Poor Infrastructure:

- a. Infrastructure challenges negatively impacted scaling up your business?
 - o Strongly Disagree
 - o Disagree
 - o Neutral
 - o Agree
 - o Strongly Agree
- b. Rate the adequacy of infrastructure support for your business needs:
 - o Very Adequate
 - o Adequate
 - o Neutral
 - o Inadequate
 - o Very Inadequate
- c. Lack of poor infrastructure facilities have affected your production/distribution timelines?
 - o Strongly Disagree
 - o Disagree
 - o Neutral
 - o Agree
 - o Strongly Agree

• Limited Market Exposure:

- a. How satisfied are you with your current market exposure?
 - Very Satisfied
 - Satisfied
 - Neutral
 - Dissatisfied
 - Very Dissatisfied
 - b. Rate the effectiveness of your current market expansion strategies:
 - Very Effective
 - Effective
 - Neutral
 - Ineffective
 - Very Ineffective
 - c. Lack of market exposure has an impact on your business growth?
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
- Managing Labor and Premium Clients:
- a. It is difficult to manage labor in terms of skills and efficiency?
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
 - b. Rate the difficulty level in managing relationships with premium clients.
 - Very Easy
 - Easy
 - Neutral
 - Difficult
 - Very Difficult
 - c. Difficulties in managing premium clients have a negative impact on your business performance?
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral

- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Section 2: Business Profitability and Innovation

• Business Profitability:

a. How would you rate the current profitability of your fashion business?

- Very Unprofitable
- Unprofitable
- Neutral
- Profitable
- Very Profitable

b. Over the past year, how has your business's profitability changed?

- Significantly Decreased
- Slightly Decreased
- Stable
- Slightly Increased
- Significantly Increased

• Innovative Solutions:

a. To what extent has your business leveraged technology to improve operations?

- Not at all
- Slightly
- Moderately
- Significantly
- Extremely

b. How successfully have strategic partnerships been implemented in your business?

- Not at all successful
- Slightly successful
- Moderately successful
- Very successful
- Extremely successful

Section 3: Focusing on Key Business Aspects:

• Product Quality:

How much emphasis does your business place on maintaining and improving the quality of your fashion products?

- Not at all

- Slightly
- Moderately
- Very
- Extremely
- Brand Identity:
 - o To what extent has your business invested in creating and enhancing a unique brand identity?
 - Not at all
 - Slightly
 - Moderately
 - Very
 - Extremely
 - Loyal Customer Base:
 - o How much effort has your business dedicated to building and retaining a loyal customer base?
 - Not at all
 - Slightly
 - Moderately
 - Very
 - Extremely
 - Supply Chain Management:
 - o To what extent has your business focused on optimizing supply chain management for efficiency and cost-effectiveness?
 - Not at all
 - Slightly
 - Moderately
 - Very
 - Extremely

Section 4: Internship and Skillset Section:

- Do you hire students as interns in your fashion business?
 - o Yes
 - o No
- If Yes, Assess the Skillset of Interns:
 - a. How would you rate the technical skills of the interns?
 - o Poor

- o Below Average
- o Average
- o Above Average
- o Excellent
- b. Rate the communication and teamwork skills of the interns:
 - o Poor
 - o Below Average
 - o Average
 - o Above Average
 - o Excellent
- c. How effective are interns in adapting to industry-specific tasks?
 - o Not Effective
 - o Slightly Effective
 - o Moderately Effective
 - o Very Effective
 - o Extremely Effective
- d. Rate the overall satisfaction with the interns' performance:
 - o Very Dissatisfied
 - o Dissatisfied
 - o Neutral
 - o Satisfied
 - o Very Satisfied
- If No, Reasons for Not Hiring fashion students as Interns:
 - o Select the reasons for not hiring interns:
 - Low financial resources for your business
 - Inadequate equipments
 - Poor brand Identity
 - Poor skill set of interns
 - Not enough clients / work
 - Other (Specify): _____

Questionnaire for Premium Clients:

- Demographic Information:
 - o Age Group:
 - 18-25 years
 - 26-35 years
 - 36-45 years

- 46-55 years
- 56+ years
- Years associated with the fashion business:
 - Business Relationship:
 - What is the maximum time have you been associated with any fashion business?
 - Less than 1 year
 - 1-3 years
 - 4-6 years
 - 7-10 years
 - More than 10 years
 - Expectations and Deliverables:
 - a. To what extent have your expectations been met by the fashion business?
 - Not at all
 - Slightly
 - Moderately
 - Significantly
 - Completely
 - b. Rate the quality of deliverables received from the fashion business:
 - Very Poor
 - Poor
 - Neutral
 - Good
 - Excellent
 - c. How satisfied are you with the quantity of deliverables provided?
 - Very Dissatisfied
 - Dissatisfied
 - Neutral
 - Satisfied
 - Very Satisfied
 - Challenges Faced:
 - a. What challenges do you face within the fashion industry while dealing with the business?
 - Quality issues
 - Timely delivery issues
 - Quantity-related concerns

- o Other (Specify): _____
- b. To what extent do these challenges impact your overall satisfaction?
 - o Not at all
 - o Slightly
 - o Moderately
 - o Significantly
 - o Extremely
- Scope of Fashion Projects:
 - o How well is the scope of fashion projects communicated and met by the business?
 - Not at all
 - Slightly
 - Moderately
 - Significantly
 - Completely
- Timeliness of Deliverables:
 - o How satisfied are you with the timeliness of deliverables from the fashion business?
 - Very Dissatisfied
 - Dissatisfied
 - Neutral
 - Satisfied
 - Very Satisfied

Questionnaire for Fashion students and faculties:

- Practical Training:
 - o To what extent do you believe that practical training is an essential component of empowering fashion students?
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
 - o How satisfied are you with the practical training opportunities provided in the current fashion education system?
 - Very Dissatisfied

- Dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Very Satisfied
- Industry Networking:
 - o Do you think that establishing connections with industry professionals is crucial for the empowerment of fashion students?
 - Not at all important
 - Slightly important
 - Moderately important
 - Very important
 - Extremely important
 - o To what extent has the current education system facilitated industry networking for fashion students?
 - Not at all
 - Slightly
 - Moderately
 - Significantly
 - Extremely
- Real-World Experience:
 - o How important is gaining real-world experience in the fashion industry for the overall empowerment of students?
 - Not at all important
 - Slightly important
 - Moderately important
 - Very important
 - Extremely important
 - o To what extent do you feel the current education system provides opportunities for students to gain real-world experience in design, production, marketing, and entrepreneurship?
 - Not at all
 - Slightly
 - Moderately
 - Significantly
 - Extremely
- Overall Empowerment:
 - o Considering practical training, industry networking, and real-world experience, how effective do you believe the current education system is in equipping

fashion students with the necessary skills and knowledge in design, production, marketing, and entrepreneurship?

- Ineffective
- Slightly Effective
- Moderately Effective
- Very Effective
- Extremely Effective

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT

Title of the Study:

FROM PASSION TO PROFIT: NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES OF
SCALING A FASHION BUSINESS IN INDIA

Researcher: Noushija M A

Affiliation: Swiss School of Business Administration

Participant Agreement:

I,, agree to participate in the research study titled " FROM PASSION TO PROFIT: NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES OF SCALING A FASHION BUSINESS IN INDIA". I have read and understood the information provided in this consent form.

Purpose and Procedures:

I understand that the purpose of this study and my participation will involve answering the questionnaires sincerely from my experience, which will take approximately 15 minutes.

Risks and Benefits:

I acknowledge that there are no known risks associated with this study. I am aware that the benefits include contributing to knowledge in the field.

Confidentiality:

I understand that my responses will be kept confidential, and my name will not be linked to my answers.

Voluntary Participation:

I am aware that my participation is entirely voluntary. I can choose not to participate or withdraw at any time without facing any consequences.

Questions:

For any questions related to the study, I can contact Noushija M A, Ph
919987527119.

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