

**CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY THROUGH CINEMA: ANALYSING THE DIFFUSION
OF 2000s FILM FASHION AMONG WOMEN**

Project Report

Submitted by

SAIRA BASHEER (SB21CE027)

Under the guidance of

Ms Leona Mary Renny

In partial fulfilment of requirements for award of the degree Of Bachelor of Arts

St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam



College With Potential for
Excellence Accredited by NAAC with 'A++'
Grade

Affiliated to
Mahatma Gandhi University
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DECLARATION

I do affirm that the project “Constructing Identity Through Cinema: Analysing the Diffusion of 2000s Film Fashion Among Women” submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the Bachelor of Arts degree in English Literature and Communication Studies has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship or any other similar title or recognition.

Ernakulam

Saira Basheer

22/03/2024

SB21CE027

B.A. English Literature and Communication Studies

St. Teresa’s College (Autonomous)

Certificate

I hereby certify that this project entitled “Constructing Identity Through Cinema: Analysing the Diffusion of 2000s Film Fashion Among Women” by Saira Basheer is a record of bonafide work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance.

Ernakulam

Leona Maria Renny

22/03/2024

Department of Communicative English

St. Teresa's College (Autonomous)

Acknowledgement

I take this opportunity to offer my humble prayers and thanks to God Almighty for His mercy and blessings for the completion of this project.

I am deeply grateful to Rev. Dr. Sr. Vinitha, CSST, Provincial Superior and Manager, St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam, for her kind cooperation and I am highly indebted to Rev. Sr. Emeline, CSST, Director, St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam and Dr. Lizzy Mathew, Principal, St. Teresa's College (Autonomous), Ernakulam for their unconditional support and encouragement during my course of study in this institution.

I am extremely grateful to Ms. Allu Alfred, Head of the Department of Communicative English, St. Teresa's College (Autonomous) for the valuable suggestions and guidance provided by her in fulfilling this project. I am profoundly indebted to my guide for her constant support and help for the successful completion of this project.

I am extremely thankful to my supervising guide,(Name), Department of Communicative English for her guidance and to all the teachers of the department for their valuable help rendered for the successful completion of this project.

Last but not the least, I wish to express my gratitude to my friends and family for their love and support.

Saira Basheer

CONTENTS

	Introduction	1
Chapter I	The Influence of Film Fashion on our Community's Perceived Body Image and Self-Esteem: Analysing How Films Impact and Influence Women	4
Chapter II	Empowerment, Representation and Societal Pressures	11
Chapter III	The Influence of Film Fashion on Consumer Behaviour	15
	Conclusion	20
	Works Cited	23

Introduction

When analysing history in every generation, clothes or fashion represent diverse implications. It portrays culture, self-expression, societal hierarchical status, personality, tradition and sexuality. Hence, it is regarded as one of the strongest aids in the film industry to communicate various themes and messages. The interaction between culture, identity, and fashion has always been well rendered in films, mainly because it helps connect and speaks volumes to the audience, especially women.

Fashion is not just for empty visual aesthetics, it is also a useful medium for voicing out issues such as equality, making political statements, and challenging societal norms. The way we dress gives people a glimpse of our personalities and beliefs. It is not just a piece of cloth; it relays messages nonverbally and this is why the film industry takes utmost care and effort while crafting costumes for characters because what we perceive can inspire us and imitate what we see on the screen.

When we analyse films from various eras, specifically the early 2000s, when television and film viewership started peaking, we can see the impact of the fashion and film industry on our community, specifically the youth. Designers ensure that characters' personalities shine through and reach the viewers' minds by ensuring bold styles to fit archetypes and adolescent clique stereotypes. Villains in long, dark coats often leather, the protagonists usually in brighter approachable colours, red most often, and the femme fatale in bodycon dresses with her hair in waves rocking a red lip are deliberate clothing choices to hint what theme or personality the character is going to convey.

The film community has always taken inspiration from film characters to express themselves through attire. A common example would be during the early 2000s when movies like *Legally Blonde*, *Mean Girls* and *The Devil Wears Prada* debuted and took over the fashion industry and youngsters' fashion sense by storm. Classifying clothes into sub-sections such as nerd, goth, prep, old-money, cosmopolitan, androgynous, etc. became more common, and costume designers continued to delve deeper into it.

This study attempts to analyse how fashion in the film industry affects and impacts women and whether the media influences the way women dress. This study also attempts to enquire about the indulgence of media in women's dressing styles. The study is divided into four chapters.

Chapter one outlines the influence of movie fashion on body Image and introduces the Magic Bullet Theory also known as the Hypodermic Needle Theory proposed by Harold Lasswell, and concepts that are commonly found in works associated with the said theory. Additionally, the first chapter will also include observations of the Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura which strongly emphasises the importance of observational learning and modelling in shaping behaviour and the Cultivation theory by George Gerbner. Chapter Two uses films from the early 2000s as examples and applies the theory by proving how they impacted women's minds and attire by comparing it to the current fashion trends in films and how that influenced women's dressing. Chapter Three analyses the impact of Movie Fashion on Consumer behaviour and links it with the theories used to prove that the Film Fashion Industry does influence Women in multifaceted ways.

The study analyses five movies from the early 2000s that left a mark in the fashion industry and shaped the minds of women when approaching fashion and stereotypes. With the help of applied theory, we can see how movies or media impact people. The movies taken for analysis are *Legally Blonde* (2001) directed by Robert Luketic, *Freaky Friday* (2003) directed

by Mark Waters based on the book by the same name written by Mary Rodgers, Mark Waters also directed the sensational film *Mean Girls* (2004), *13 going on 30* (2004) directed by Gary Winick and *The Devil Wears Prada* (2006) directed by David Frankel.

Chapter 1

The Influence of Film Fashion on our Community's

Perceived Body Image and Self-Esteem:

Analysing How Films Impact and Influence Women

Fashion is not about utility. An accessory is merely a piece of iconography used to express individual identity – Doug, The Devil Wears Prada

Each form of media has played a crucial role in the technological and cultural aspects of development. A popular form of media that has affected people is most definitely films. From the day Lumiere Brothers screened the first motion picture to the present age, movies are a tool used to convey various messages to intended audiences. The film industry has been codependent on the fashion industry for innumerable reasons and vice versa. It acts as a useful medium to transport ideas that flow into people's minds, especially targeting women and boosting consumerism. Films have always portrayed women and their style in certain ways as one may also say using stereotypes or creating them to paint a picture of a particular personality. Fashion, especially in this era is very important, it has become a set point for many elements of our day-to-day lives.

Today, even children are beginning to understand the differences between style and aesthetics, following trends while also creating them. While bold fashion statements have been in use since the 70s, this project aims to prove that films began influencing women and their dressing on a large scale in the 2000s and that is because more people started using Television and the usage of DVDs also became widespread during this era. People started consuming films that were very colourful and preppy at the time. It was an era of entertainment where studios took risks representing a new era of filmmaking and can be perfectly characterised by

over-the-top comedy fun, optimistic family movies, coming-of-age films, action-packed popcorn shows, and chick flicks. In addition to the previously made statement, the era also saw success in animated movies and superhero movies.

People feel the urge to channel the characters portrayed in the films. The characters targeting women were often glamorous, and effortless, even their 'flaws' were mostly romanticised, exploring various fashion styles and statements became a crucial point then. This is where the theory proposed by Harold Lasswell in 1927 comes into play. It is one of the earliest theories on Media Effects and Media Behaviours. It is an assumption-based theory that was derived from behavioural psychology and relied on the state of media consumers of that time.

Though many scholars believed the theory to be not so credible due to the lack of empirical pieces of evidence and it has been debunked by Paul Lazarsfeld in the past arguing the credibility of other models, when we flash forward to the emergence and development of Mass Media and Film Production, the theory has gone through much rethinking and consideration in the modern age. The theory suggests that the media (the titular metaphorical magic gun) shot the message straight into their heads without the audience members' understanding. "Magic Bullet Theory" refers to the idea that the audience responds to it immediately and without hesitation. The media introduces the message into the public's consciousness, altering their behaviour and mentality in response to it. The theory is the media's message, and the audience is passive and powerless to fight it.

It addresses the influence of media messages on viewers' minds and how viewers respond to such messages without hesitation irrespective of the reason behind it. After careful consideration of the basic tenets of the theory and the study 'Rethinking the Bullet Theory in the Digital Age' by Chinenye Nwabueze and Ebere Okonkwo where it is stated that the technologically developing age finds relevance in the bullet theory because we are constantly exposed to the mass media. When we apply these principles to films of the early 2000s, it

becomes clear how the fashion industry and film industry go hand in hand to influence women and their notions about attire. A woman character's outfit in a film is simply not just clothes, it conveys her inner life as the heroine and sketches her emotions out.

The Cultivation Theory, conceptualized by George Gerbner, posits that prolonged exposure to media content moulds an individual's perception of reality, shaping their attitudes and beliefs to align with the depictions portrayed in media sources (Gerbner, 1969). This theory has significant implications for various aspects of society, including the influence of media representations on individuals' perceptions of fashion.

Research conducted on the Cultivation Theory suggests that media, particularly films, play a crucial role in shaping women's perceptions of fashion and influencing their self-image and choices (Shrum, 1996). Women are often exposed to idealised portrayals of beauty and style through various media channels, leading to the internalization of unrealistic beauty standards (Grabe et al., 2008).

Studies examining the impact of media on body image, self-esteem, and fashion preferences have highlighted the detrimental effects of exposure to idealized beauty standards portrayed in media, especially in films (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). Such exposure has been linked to increased levels of body dissatisfaction among women and the internalization of unrealistic beauty ideals (Groesz et al., 2002).

Influencing consumer behaviour and perpetuating gender stereotypes are two of the crucial effects of film in our community. This theory provides a framework for understanding how repeated exposure cultivates specific perceptions and attitudes in women. To understand the influence of this theory, the early 2000s movie *Legally Blonde* can be taken into account. This comedy starring Reese Witherspoon as Elle Woods, the smart, witty and 'pink' law student popularised preppy and pink-themed fashion trends. It influenced many viewers to embrace feminine and sophisticated fashion choices. The inclusion of 'feminine' formal outfits began during this era as the movie's message that you can be smart yet fashionable was

embraced by women across the globe. While there may not be any citations for trends that emerged due to movies, such behaviour is often the result of media influence, celebrity endorsements and cultural shifts. Fashion and Entertainment Magazines such as Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, and Elle feature articles embracing the trends.

The Social Learning Theory developed by Albert Bandura highlights the role of observational learning and modelling in shaping behaviour. According to this theory, individuals learn by observing the actions and outcomes of their peers, including those depicted in media. Such representations in media serve as a model for their behaviour, influencing 'imitation' that enables the viewers to consciously or subconsciously follow what they see in films. All three theories collectively suggest that films or media play a role in shaping attitudes, beliefs, perceptions and societal trends by influencing our perceptions, and agenda-setting. As such, films have the potential to influence us and the easiest way is through film fashion mimicking which gives the viewers a sense of authority and a form of escapism by dressing inspired by their favourite characters from films.

Jojo's Bizarre Adventure, a long-running Japanese manga series, and anime franchise with two major live-action films is a prime example of the extent films influence the fashion industry that flows into our community. Authored by Hirohiko Araki, the franchise is known for its unique art style and flamboyant characters boasting extravagant fashion. It has left an undeniable mark on our community. Inspiring fashion designers globally with their avant-garde movements and influencing runway shows featuring elaborate costumes and bold colour schemes, the films have also sparked a trend called 'Jojo Pose' emulating the distinctive poses of characters. Gucci's Fall/Winter 2013 collection designed by creative director Frida Giannini featured bold colours, graphic prints and most importantly, exaggerated silhouettes that reminisce the exuberant style seen in Jojo's.

This chapter intends to clarify how film fashion trends have affected society's beauty standards, altered women's opinions of their bodies and impacted their self-esteem and

confidence through content analysis of the fashion aesthetics depicted in these films. Through an analysis of fashion's cultural significance and enduring influence, the research offers valuable insights into the complex interplay among media representation, body image, and self-image. The early 2000s witnessed a cinematic explosion of teen comedies and chick flicks that resonated deeply with young women. In the pivotal period in the history of film fashion, classic films like *Legally Blonde*, *Mean Girls*, *The Devil Wears Prada*, *13 Going on 30* and *Freaky Friday* shaped popular culture's ideas of what was beautiful and fashionable.

These movies depicted sophisticated female characters with unique personalities and fashion tastes in addition to showcasing a variety of fashion aesthetics. When heroines in movies wear a particular dress or a specific hairstyle, it impacts many women. It creates a false notion or a curious desire to imitate, be it for validation, self-confidence boost, etc. Highlighting how important it is to comprehend how society's conceptions of the idealised body are shaped by movie depictions of style and beauty. It investigates how the visual stories portrayed on TV act as potent catalysts, subtly influencing society's expectations and notions of beauty. By using this theory as a lens through which to view it the chapter explores how cinema fashion might influence women who see these media messages in terms of their confidence, self-image, and fashion choices.

Beginning with *Legally Blonde*, which came out in 2001, traced the adventures of stylish and driven law student Elle Woods. Elle's signature pink outfits, opulent accessories, and feminine aesthetic have come to represent empowerment and self-assurance. The movie questioned preconceived notions about blondes and praised Elle's wit, fortitude, and uniqueness. *Legally Blonde* encouraged women to embrace their femininity and assertiveness by inspiring fashions like preppy chic and the colour pink. In the 2004 film *Mean Girls*, the high school social structure was portrayed with scathing humour and a keen sense of wit. The characters' varied personalities were mirrored in the film's wardrobe choices, from Regina George's stylish and self-assured look to Cady Heron's metamorphosis from outsider to "Plastic." The movie

influenced teen fashion and reinforced social norms linked to popularity and thinness by popularizing trends like miniskirts, low-rise jeans, and Juicy Couture tracksuits.

With its 2006 premiere, *The Devil Wears Prada*, provided an insight into the competitive world of high fashion and magazine publishing. The film, which portrayed the aspirational lifestyle of fashion industry insiders, featured haute attire, designer labels, and editorial elegance. Women's ideas of professional and office wear were influenced by Runway magazine's powerful editor-in-chief, Miranda Priestly, who personified power dressing and sophisticated style. *13 Going on 30*, which came out in 2004, offered a nostalgic look back at the 1980s from the perspective of Jenna Rink, a young lady who suddenly and miraculously becomes an adult. Bold designs, vivid colours, and striking accessories were among the retro-inspired outfits seen in the movie, which perfectly captured the carefree and lighthearted vibe of the time

Audiences were moved by Jenna's journey of self-acceptance and self-discovery, which encouraged women to embrace their inner child and embrace their distinctive eccentricities and hobbies. In the body-swapping comedy *Freaky Friday*, which debuted in 2003, the themes of empathy and identity were examined. In the movie, Tess and Anna, a mother-daughter team, switch bodies and develop a fresh respect for one another's viewpoints. The characters' personalities and roles were mirrored in *Freaky Friday* fashion, from Tess's refined and businesslike look to Anna's eclectic and rebellious look. The movie encouraged women to accept change and their uniqueness by highlighting the value of honesty and self-expression.

But the influence went beyond just aesthetics. These movies also delicately—and perhaps not so delicately—addressed the difficult subject of body image. *Legally Blonde* questioned the notion that blonde women are stupid, while *Mean Girls* highlighted the pressure to live up to unattainable beauty standards. The comedic take on dealing with concerns through a body swap in *Freaky Friday* and the dark side of fixation with thinness and unachievable beauty

standards in *The Devil Wears Prada*. Although these movies frequently featured idealized characters, they also provoked debates over how women's bodies are portrayed and whether or not they could be detrimental to self-esteem. Feelings of inferiority and unhappiness with one's body may be exacerbated by certain characters' idealised physiques and artificial thinness. But the movies also included a variety of physique shapes and styles encouraging viewers, namely young women to embrace themselves. The way that women view their bodies and self-images has been greatly influenced by the fashion depicted in films from the early 2000s.

Unrealistic notions of femininity have been sustained and societal beauty standards have been reinforced by the abundance of slender, glamorous, and aspirational women on film. Women are influenced to dress like their favourite characters, which causes them to compare and feel insecure about their bodies and looks. Furthermore, the representation of strong, self-assured female role models has motivated women to value their individuality and take charge of many facets of their lives. Despite social expectations, female characters such as Elle Woods and Jenna Rink have inspired women to defy stereotypes, follow their passions, and embrace their uniqueness.

Early 2000s films' representation of fashion and female characters had a long-lasting effect on women's perceptions of their bodies and their own identities. These movies have embraced uniqueness and set trends, but they have also reinforced gender stereotypes and conventional notions of beauty. It is crucial to understand the intricate relationships between cinematic fashion, body image, and self-image as we continue to examine and evaluate how women are portrayed in the media. We should also work toward more inclusive and diverse representations that uplift women of all origins and sizes.

Chapter 2

Empowerment, Representation and Societal Pressures

Film fashion frequently presents an idealised image of women, complete with glitzy attire and unreachable beauty standards. A view of femininity that is mostly dependent on material belongings was created in the 2000s by movies like *The Devil Wears Prada* (2006) and *Sex and the City* (1998–2004), which exalt high fashion and designer brands (O'Connor & Jago, 2010). According to Riches and Zhao (2012), viewers, especially young women, may experience emotions of inadequacy and unreasonable expectations as a result of this idealised representation. Contemporary films, however, are starting to challenge these constrained portrayals more and more. Fashion is used in films like *Hustlers* (2019) and *Promising Young Woman* (2020) to challenge conventional ideas of femininity. In these films, clothes serve as a technique for character empowerment, expressing their autonomy and rejecting the masculine gaze. Similar to this, films like *Misrepresentation* (2011) and *The Mask You Live In* (2015) urge women to embrace their uniqueness and rethink their connection with fashion by challenging the unattainable beauty standards presented in the media.

The popularisation and dissemination of fashion trends are greatly aided by the fashion industry. With films like *Mean Girls* (2004) and *Legally Blonde* (2001), 'McBling', a style known for its low-rise jeans, platform shoes and exposed midriffs, came into vogue in the early 2000s. Young women quickly embraced these patterns, demonstrating how films may influence real-world fashion decisions. But cinema also reflects current subcultures. Movies such as *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (2012) and *Lady Bird* (2017) genuinely portray the fashion choices made by teenagers, highlighting the impact of alternative aesthetics and indie music. Similarly, films like 2018's *Black Panther* and 2018's *Crazy Rich Asians* highlight the distinctive fashions and customs of many cultures while celebrating cultural diversity.

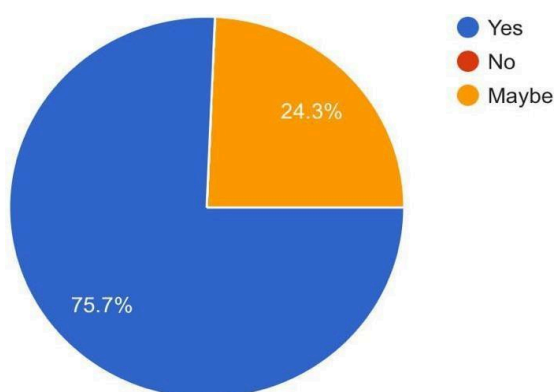
Film fashion has an influence that goes beyond aesthetics and trends. Movies that feature

characters who wear clothing that defies social norms can empower women. The famous yellow jumpsuit worn by The Bride in *Kill Bill: Vol. 1* (2003) and "Vol. 2" (2004) becomes a representation of her tenacity and fortitude. In the same vein, Diana's Amazonian armour in *Wonder Woman* (2017) symbolises her strength and cultural identity beyond simple attire. Additionally, via fashion, films may spur societal change and action. Films such as "The True Cost" (2015) and *The Minimalists* (2016) encourage viewers to make thoughtful fashion decisions by bringing attention to the moral and environmental consequences of quick fashion. Moreover, films like *Miss Bala* (2019) and *Queen & Slim* (2019) employ fashion to subvert gender norms and support the emancipation of women.

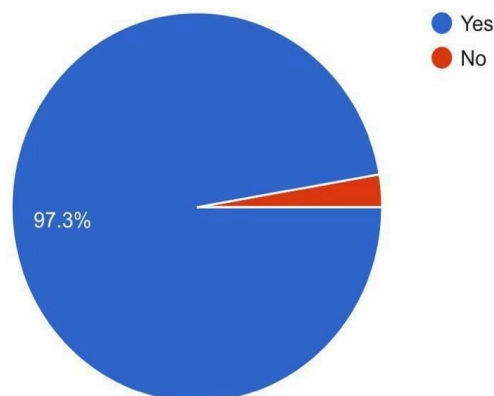
Even while movie fashion has its advantages, it's important to recognise its drawbacks. The media frequently faces representational issues, underrepresenting plus-size women, women of colour, and other marginalised groups. While reviewers commended films like *Ghostbusters* (2016) and *Ocean's Eight* (2018) for having varied female actors, they also drew attention to the underrepresentation of women in such casts. In addition, intersectionality must be taken into account while examining the effects of cinematic fashion. Some of the characteristics that influence women's experiences are race, class, and sexual orientation. Motion pictures such as *Selma* (2014) and *Moonlight* (2016) offer sophisticated depictions of how fashion interacts with different identities, encouraging audiences to contemplate the intricacies of representation.

Findings from a survey given to women to look into the impact of movie fashion showed that a sizable percentage of respondents actively interact with and are influenced by the outfits that movie characters choose to wear. All participants (100%) admitted to observing what characters in films wear, demonstrating a strong interest in the fashion components shown on screen. Additionally, a resounding majority of respondents—75.7%—affirmed that they are inspired by the wardrobe choices of fictional characters in movies. Additionally, even respondents who did not explicitly acknowledge that their decisions were impacted by these

kinds of choices—24.3% of them—showed some degree of transparency by selecting the option "Maybe," implying that they could be susceptible to the allure of movie fashion subconsciously. Likewise, the results of the questionnaire provided insight into the frequency with which respondents wore particular movie-inspired fashion trends.



Remarkably, 97.3% of respondents said they have seen certain fashion trends evolve as a result of how they were portrayed in films. This remark highlights the important role that films play in popularising and spreading fashion trends in modern society. Furthermore, a significant percentage of participants, including 70.3%, acknowledged deliberately striving to imitate or duplicate the appearances displayed by film characters. This proactive behaviour highlights the the significant influence that movie fashion has on personal fashion choices and preferences.



Nevertheless, pressure to comply is a complicated side consequence of this impact.

13.5% of respondents said they experience this pressure most frequently, while nearly 60% of respondents said they occasionally feel pressure to meet the ideals of beauty that society portrays in films. This draws attention to the possible drawbacks of cinematic fashion, where inflated representations may lead to unreachable standards and lower self-esteem.

This reveals the the complex interplay of film imagery and real-life perception of self-esteem. The results also highlight the complex effects of fashion movie representations on women's perceptions of their bodies and of themselves. 91.7% of participants recognised the dual nature of this impact, acknowledging that how fashion is portrayed in films has the potential to evoke both positive and negative self-image impressions. Positive effects might result from copying strong, independent people and negative effects could arise from comparing oneself to unachievable beauty standards.

Chapter 3

The Influence of Film Fashion on Consumer Behaviour

From the Silver Screens to Shopping Sprees, the enduring influence of Film Fashion on Consumer Behaviour is everlasting. More than just a source of amusement, the alluring world of film has the power to influence our goals, objectives, and even our financial situation. There is no denying that movie fashion has an impact on consumer behaviour. This has led us to analyze the complex relationship between celluloid styles and current trends. It wasn't just about replicating looks; it became a tool for self-expression and identity formation. Teenagers and young women used clothing to navigate social groups, express their individuality, and experiment with different versions of themselves. The films mirrored this reality, showing how characters used fashion to navigate social hierarchies, challenge stereotypes, and build confidence. It is essential to comprehend the psychological processes underlying this influence. Movies appeal to our needs for escape, self-expression, and social acceptance. When we see someone we look up to wearing a particular style, it can make us want to imitate them in the hopes of gaining some of their confidence, coolness, or social standing.

Apart from providing us with a means of escape from our everyday lives, movies also let us experiment with styles and identities we wouldn't typically wear. The fashion inspiration drawn from the silver screen is fueled by this yearning for self-discovery and reinvention. This potent synergy has been recognized by the fashion and film industries, resulting in strategic partnerships and product placements. Costume designers make outfits, especially for movies since they are aware of the possibility of greater brand exposure and virality. Similar to this, companies spend a lot of money to have their goods appear in movies because they profit from the association with relatable people and plots. This partnership blurs the boundaries between cinematic illusion and reality by seamlessly fusing fashion and movies. Trends influenced by movies are amplified and changed by social media. Like virtual runways, Instagram and

TikTok allow fans to recreate classic looks, share their interpretations, and motivate others.

This results in a dynamic feedback loop where trends are always changing and adjusting to suit different people's tastes and styles. The popularity of fashion bloggers and influencers, who frequently take their cues from movies, further broadens the appeal and impact of cinematic looks.

Beyond the Surface lies the dark side of fashion influence. It's important to acknowledge the potential downsides of this influence. The pressure to conform to idealised film characters and unrealistic beauty standards can negatively impact self-esteem and body image, particularly among young viewers. Additionally, the fast-paced nature of fashion trends fueled by films can contribute to overconsumption and unsustainable practices within the fashion industry. As the film industry becomes more diverse and socially conscious, we can expect to see fashion portrayals that challenge stereotypes and promote inclusivity. Taking into account the mechanisms of influence, 'aspirational consumption' triggers the viewer's desire to emulate the depicted lifestyle.

According to research by O'Connor & Jago (2010), watching high-end films might make people want to live up to the lives that are shown, which can boost their spending on comparable goods. When watching a film, viewers frequently relate to the characters and use their style choices as a way to express themselves. One example of this relationship is the widespread appeal of Katniss Everdeen's braided hairdo from *The Hunger Games* (McRobbie, 2000). This thought process which is 'character identification' boosts sales by directly participating in the consumption of goods.

Citing a 2018 NPD Group survey, underscoring the direct influence of movie fashion on particular purchases, *Black Panther* -inspired apparel sales increased by 73% after its debut. High-end labels such as Dior and Gucci are more often joining together with motion pictures to produce costume-inspired capsule collections that further conflate real life and cinema. Using tools like Brandwatch and Sprout Social to analyse social media conversations around famous

films may provide significant insights into consumer moods and trends by showing how viewers debate and respond to film fashion.

With their original programming, streaming services like Netflix and Hulu are encouraging a more varied and nuanced representation of fashion and giving viewers a glimpse into trends and styles that were not previously visible. Character development and story structure are more flexible on streaming platforms, which results in more intricate and varied depictions of fashion. While not films, programmes like *Euphoria* and *Pose* push the frontiers of modern design with daring and unique fashions, and shows like *Bridgerton* and "Russian Doll" examine historical and period dress with subtle accuracy.

Streaming exposes viewers to a broader range of cultural aesthetics and fashion trends since it bypasses territorial restrictions and promotes global reach. In this fast-paced era where online shopping sites are the rage because of the flexibility and plethora of options they provide consumers, *Parasite* and *Lupin* have generated worldwide curiosity about Korean and French fashion, respectively, underscoring their potential for impact on other markets.

The transient fashion fads dubbed "micro-trends" are becoming increasingly influential, drawing in viewers and influencing their wardrobe decisions. These little expressions of style, which frequently come from pop culture or specialised markets, provide insight into the dynamic interplay between trends, movie fashion, and consumer behaviour. As a result of niche streaming services' ability to reach certain populations and interests, micro-trends and hyper-personalized fashion choices have become increasingly popular. Websites like Funimation and Crunchyroll promote cosplay culture and its fusion of fandom-driven fashion interpretations.

Micro-trends sometimes emerge from unexpected places, such as social media platforms, underground subcultures, or even brief periods in popular culture, defying established routes of fashion diffusion. For instance, the emergence of "cottage-core" aesthetics, which are defined by romanticised rural lifestyles, vintage clothing, and flowery designs, might be linked to the nostalgia and escape-seeking of online groups. Similar to this, niche internet communities

promoting uniqueness and unusual aesthetics gave rise to the "goblin core" movement, which embraces earthy tones, natural textures, and a playful disdain for traditional beauty standards. Films are a powerful stimulant for microtrends, providing a visual medium for specialised aesthetics to become more widely known. A compelling outfit in one scene has the power to ignite a microtrend. Recalling Natalie Portman's famous crimson gown from *Black Swan*, the Red dress sales skyrocketed as a result of its eerie elegance and symbolic meaning, proving that films have the ability to bring specialist aesthetics to the general public.

Moreover, films explore certain historical eras or subcultures, providing audiences with an insight into distinctive fashion trends. The brilliant streetwear in *The Hunger Games* fostered a desire for dystopian-inspired fashion, while the lavish clothes in *Bridgerton* rekindled interest in Regency-era aesthetics. By introducing viewers to specialised aesthetics and creating the conditions for the emergence of micro-trends, these cinematic depictions serve as trend incubators. The fleeting nature of micro-trends is what makes them so appealing.

Micro-trends appeal to those who want to show their uniqueness and keep up with the latest trends because they provide a sense of freshness and exclusivity, in contrast to established trends that might seem monotonous.

These styles' short duration contributes to their allure as well. The transient quality creates a feeling of urgency, motivating buyers to seize them before they go and infusing the fashion experience with a fun "collecting" component. Moreover, micro-trends frequently correspond with more general societal changes and concerns. For example, the popularity of gender-fluid apparel corresponds with expanding conversations about inclusion and self-expression, while the emergence of "athleisure" reflects a growing demand for comfort and practicality in daily life. Micro-trends engage with customers more deeply by leveraging these underlying currents, which promotes a sense of belonging.

It's important to recognise the limitations of microtrends, though. Their abrupt increases and decreases might fuel the fast fashion cycle by promoting impulsive buying and unsustainable

consumption. Furthermore, the transient nature of these trends may put pressure on individuals to keep up with them at all times, which might result in feelings of inadequacy and discontent. In the end, it's important to address microtrends thoughtfully. To express themselves and have fun experimenting with their particular style, consumers should embrace them rather than give in to the pressure of perpetual buying. Acknowledging the transient nature of these trends enables people to appreciate them for what they are: transitory peeks into the always-changing realm of fashion.

Conclusion

The film industry is a fascinating tapestry of inspiring and engrossing tales, people, and images. Beyond the compelling stories and stunning settings, however, fashion is an even more potent force. Film costumes, such as the famous white dress from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and the stylish suits from *The Devil Wears Prada*, have evolved beyond simple aesthetic decisions to become cultural icons that have a significant impact on women's purchasing habits and sense of style.

The intricate interactions between aspiration, identity, and trend spread have been shown by this project's exploration of the complicated link between cinema fashion and its effects on women. As we've seen, films often present idealised lives and looks, which inspires viewers to aspire to these high-minded representations. We've looked at how fans identify with characters and use their style preferences to express themselves. Furthermore, the ability of films to popularise particular looks and trends has been demonstrated, influencing the overall direction of women's fashion (O Connor & Jago, 2010)

But it's important to recognise the nuances and dangers that come with this influence. While films have the capacity to uplift and inspire, they may also promote impulsive buying and maintain unattainable beauty standards. The urge to follow fads may be very harmful to one's financial stability and sense of self. As a result, it's important to consider the effect of cinema fashion carefully. We may interact with the silver screen critically when we acknowledge its ability to influence our desires and perceptions. We may steer clear of its possible hazards while yet appreciating its inventiveness and ingenuity. Without giving in to damaging trends or excessive expectations, women may use cinema fashion as a vehicle for self-expression by valuing sustainability, embracing uniqueness, and encouraging body positivity.

We may see how frequent exposure to cinema fashion alters our values and perceptions by applying the cultivation principle. Movies show idealised lives and looks, which are frequently connected to pleasure and success. According to the cultivation hypothesis, this

ongoing exposure might foster aspirations to imitate these representations, which can heighten interest in related fashion trends (O'Connor & Jago, 2010). The classic *Breakfast at Tiffany's* little black dress or the stylish power suits from *The Devil Wears Prada* are two great instances of how films may inspire aspirational fantasies. That being said, the magic bullet idea advises against oversimplifying this impact.

Movies are more than merely "bullets" that ingrain tendencies in obliging audiences. Rather, they serve as mirrors that reflect the social and cultural norms that are already in place. For example, in the early 2000s 'McBling' fashion style was not only influenced by *Mean Girls* films; it also reflected broader tendencies of consumerism and conspicuous spending (Davis, 2004). This emphasises how intricately cinema and society interact, with film serving as a potent amplifier when trends arise from a convergence of variables.

Film fashion is more than just aesthetics; it can set trends, give people a voice, and transform society. Notwithstanding issues like underrepresentation and inflated beauty standards, there are benefits to cinema fashion that should not be overlooked. The survey results and research for this project show a fascinating and nuanced interaction between fashion and movies. Viewers regularly participate in cinematic representations, frequently taking inspiration from them and following suit. Films use fashion to question conventional notions of femininity, while it also promoting consumption. The demands to live up to unattainable ideals and the lack of adequate representation, however, still cause difficulties. To fully understand how race, class, and other variables alter people's lives, intersectionality must be taken into account while analysing these effects.

This understanding is further enhanced by the social learning theory. Women pick up new attitudes and behaviours, including style choices, by watching and relating to characters. In addition to serving as a costume piece, Katniss Everdeen's braided hairdo from *The Hunger Games* inspired many others to wear similar looks as a sign of bravery and defiance (McRobbie, 2000). This demonstrates how movie characters may behave as role models, impacting people's

sense of self and societal identity in general. It is imperative to acknowledge the significant impact that cinematic fashion has on women. It gives us the ability to interact with it critically, appreciating its possibilities for creativity and self-expression while also being aware of its constraints.

To avoid giving in to impulsive buying or unrealistic beauty standards, it is essential to promote body acceptance and media literacy (Wolf, 1991). In the end, there are many facets to the dynamic interaction between women and cinema fashion. Understanding these impacts is crucial since both the film business and consumer preferences are always changing. Women may use cinema fashion as a tool for self-discovery and empowerment, creating their narratives and confidently expressing their individuality, by embracing the power of the silver screen while negotiating its complications.

The interplay between women and cinema fashion will continue to be important to comprehend as the film business and consumer preferences change. We can make sure that the silver screen provides a platform for empowerment and self-discovery through the alluring world of fashion, in addition to being a source of enjoyment and escape, by recognising its complex influence and encouraging conscientious interaction. In the future, it will be essential to support critical media literacy and varied representation. We may use cinema fashion's impact to enable women to craft their narratives and express themselves truthfully by acknowledging both its potential benefits and drawbacks.

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