

A STUDY ON DESIGNERS' BOUTIQUES OF HAUZ KHAS VILLAGE IN NEW DELHI

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ABSTRACT:

Boutique is a French word and has been defined as a chic little store selling unique or fashionable clothes and accessories. Hasty and Reardon (1997) pointed out that the rise in the number of boutiques is an example of the changing attitudes of today's customers. They expect more from their purchases, including not practicality but also individuality. Boutiques are much like specialty stores, which appeal to more limited target markets. They are usually found in downtown areas, fashionable shopping districts and large upscale shopping centers. Boutiques are also found in self contained areas within department stores. As the boutique culture is catching up, an effort has been made to study such designer boutiques and their contribution to Indian fashion industry. To conduct the study, the related literature was reviewed. Sixty five boutiques were selected by purposive sampling technique. A Questionnaire was prepared for the survey of various boutiques of Hauz Khas village keeping in mind the aims and objectives of the study. The interview schedule method was adopted to collect the data and then collected data was analyzed.

Key words: designers' boutiques, types of boutiques, current scenario of fashion industry, marketing practices, grappling issues of fashion industry, fashion design councils

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INTRODUCTION:

Clothing is the external shell that prompts a person to think of his real self". Clothing plays a significant role in an individual's life at all stages. It provides a mean to self expression and aesthetic enjoyment. It conforms oneself, suggests wealth, prestige and is an outlet for creative energy. It serves protective, as well as psychological and sociological functions. If clothing was not required for social situations or as a protective agent against weather, there would neither be any fashion nor any change in the fashion world (Ryan, 1990).

Fashion and clothing are interrelated and dependent on each other. As per time the fashion changes and accordingly the requirement of clothing, for that fashion comes automatically. Fashion is what is accepted either as a way of dressing or doing of something by most people at a given time. It is a style or trend which is accepted by mass number of people at a particular period. Webster defines fashion as "prevailing custom, usage or styles" and this means the styles or styles of clothing, popular at a given period. Through fashion we express our behavior and uniqueness. Fashion has a rhyme and a rhythm and each designer, good or bad, celebrated or cast-aside, sways to their own drummer(Sen ,1990).

In every part of the country where fashion-minded consumers are present, small business called boutiques have opened to serve their needs. They are primarily women's emporiums, but more men's and children's shops of this nature are coming into the fashion retailing scene. Boutiques differentiate themselves from other types of retailers by offering an assortment of higher priced items in small quantities, thereby providing a degree of exclusivity for their clientele. The merchandise is also different from what the department stores and specialty chain stores offer. Many boutiques feature custom designed clothing and unique accessories from fashion's famous markets. Generally one-unit entrepreneurs boutiques are able to cater to the needs of a small but affluent market (Kumar, 1985).

Boutique is a small shop or departmental store selling especially fashionable clothes and accessories. Stone (1985) believes that boutique is a shop associated with few-of-a kind merchandise generally of very new or extreme styling with an imaginative presentation of goods. It is a French word used for "shop". Dunn (1972) believes that boutique bridge the gap between the haute couture and mass produced garments. Better class stores frequently have a boutique within a department to cater to those who require something different from the general merchandise. The process of setting up a boutique requires not only perfection in designing,

cutting and an eye for fashion, colour etc, but also traits like dedication, enthusiasm, honesty, decision-making, awareness, communication skills, mathematical ability etc. Boutique are owned and operated by highly creative people who are eager to promote their own fashion enthusiasms. A new breed of designers has taken hold of fashion evolution. These rising stars of fashion world create wearable decorative art by linking the material culture with their national identity and use clothing as a canvas to spread their personal vision. Their target customers are like minded souls who share their unique attitudes about dressing (Kaur, 1999).

The Designer boutiques have become a well paying business and the role of the skilled workers and designer has taken this business to a new height. Hauz khas village in New Delhi is famous for many such boutiques that display the collections of famous Indian designers. It is the most desirable destination of upcoming designers. Hauz khas village can be termed as hub of designers and collectors. This market with its location and ancient architectural backdrops, definitely offers a wonderful and unique experience. In the present study, an effort has been made to study such boutiques set up by various designers in Hauz khas village. The following aims and objectives were kept in mind while conducting the study-

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the boutiques and the designers' associated with them.
2. To study infrastructure and functioning of designers' boutiques.
3. To study the specialization of designers' boutiques.
4. To study various sale promotion techniques used by designers' boutiques.
5. To find out various problems faced by designers' boutiques.

LIMITATIONS:

The study was limited to all the boutiques of Hauz Khas village which were established for a minimum of 5 yrs.

METHODOLOGY:

To conduct the study related literature was reviewed, for the present study survey method was used. A Questionnaire cum Interview schedule was prepared keeping in mind the aim & objectives of the study. Hauz Khas village in New Delhi was selected as this was one of the major fashion hubs of the country which has design houses of various renowned designers. 65

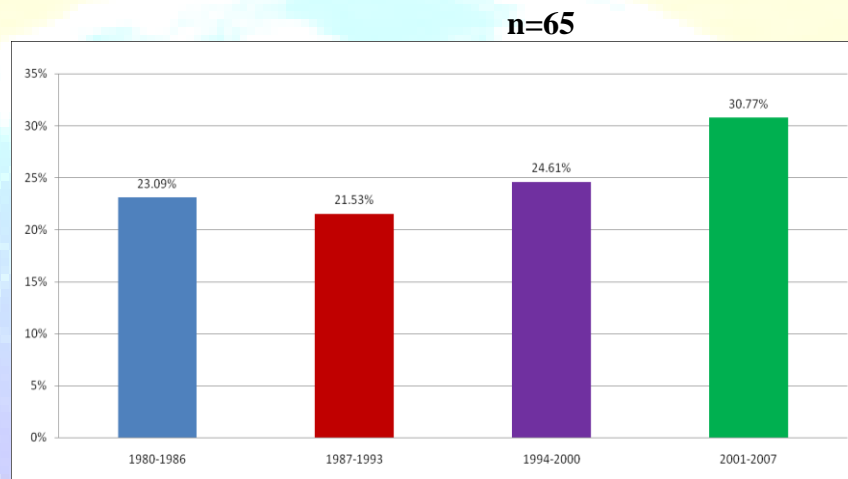
designers boutiques were selected which were established for minimum of 5 yrs. The collected data was then coded, tabulated & analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

This part focus on the findings, relevant to the study and their discussions. The data collected for the present study has been analyzed and presented in the form of frequencies and percentages to know the emerging trend of Designer boutiques of Hauz Khas village in New Delhi.

Section I- Basic information of the boutiques

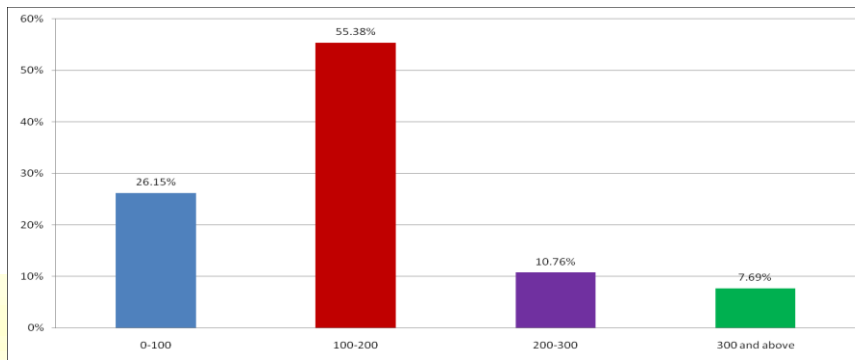
Table 1: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of year of establishment



Majority of boutiques i.e. 31% opened during the year 2000-2007. A progressive growth in the number of boutiques is seen with each passing year and is an indicative of fashion consciousness among people.

Table 2: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of area covered by the boutique

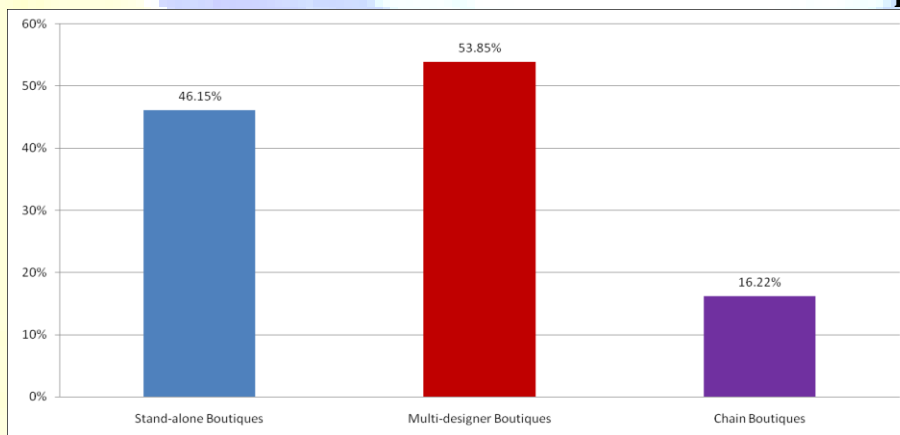
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55% of Boutiques cover the area 100-200 sq ft as the cost of land is very high in Hauz Khas village. Only 8% of boutiques which were long established and had undergone expansion program cover the area i.e 300 sqft and above.

Table 3: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of type of boutiques

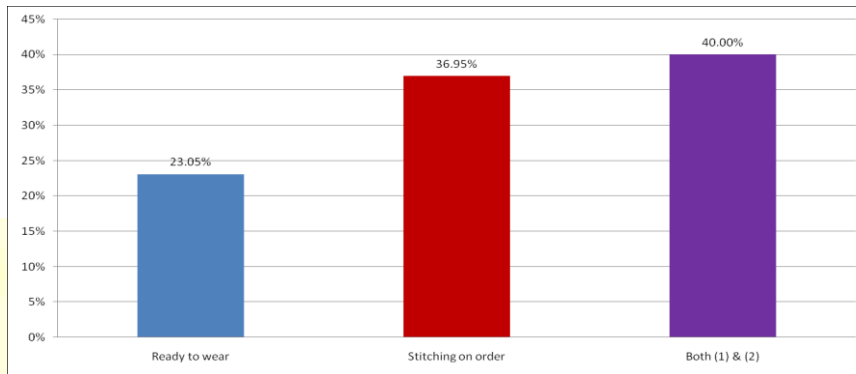
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54% of boutiques were Multi-designer boutiques as people these days are very fashion conscious and go for designer wear for their individuality whereas 46% of boutiques were stand-alone who specialize in Bridal wear such as lehngas, suits, sarees.

Table 4: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of specialty of boutique

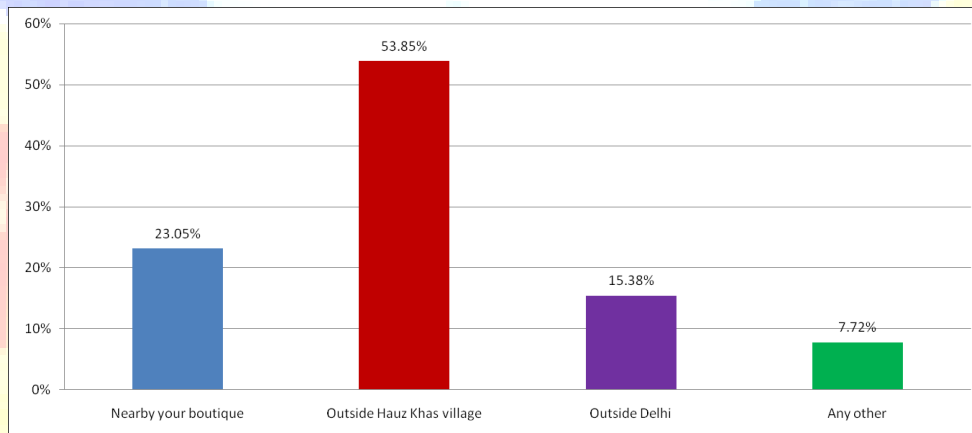
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Majority of boutiques (40%) keep ready to wear garments as well as stitch garments on order whereas 37% of boutiques stitch on order only. The number of such boutiques is high because these boutiques design according to the customer's expectation. 23% of boutiques specialize only in ready to wear as people get different designer wear and a large variety

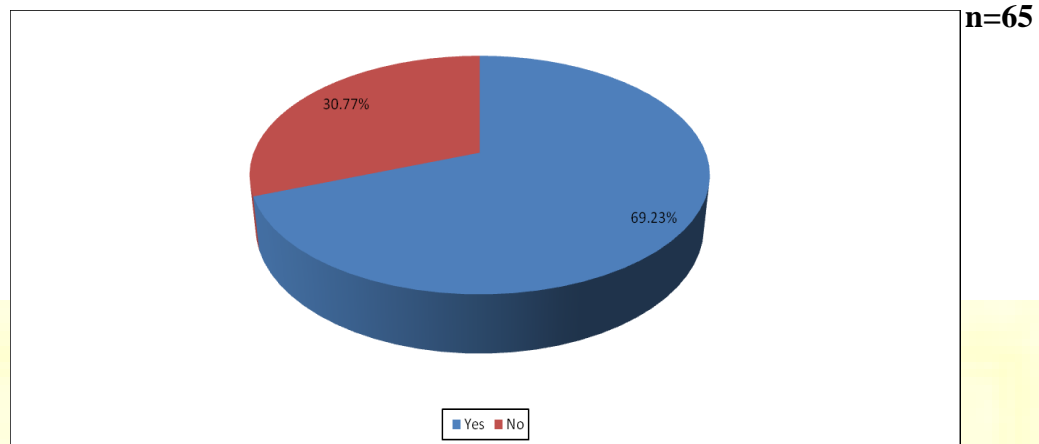
Table 5: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of the location of their workshops

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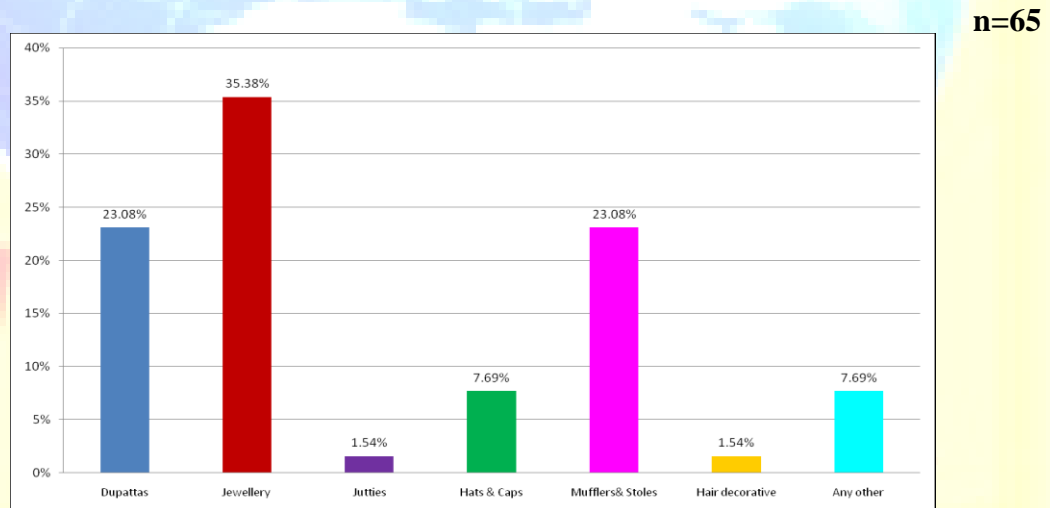
Majority of the boutiques (54%) had their workshops outside the Hauz Khas village as the cost of land is very high in this area. 15% of boutiques had their workshops outside Delhi in Noida , Jaipur & Gurgaon as the labour is cheap in these areas and they specialize in quality work.

Table 6: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of availability of fabric in the boutique



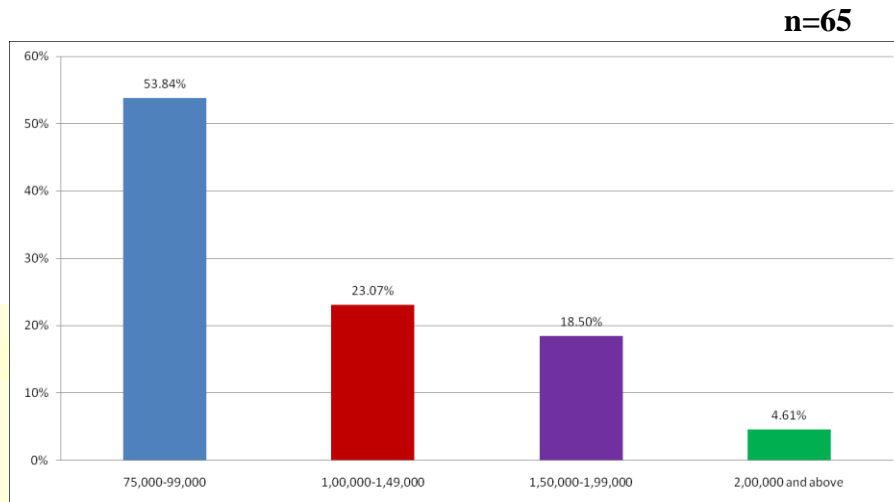
Majority of the boutiques 69% which specialize in order garments keep a large variety of fabrics for selling as it help them to convince the customers about their design concepts & make them aware of new trends in the market

Table 7: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of variety of accessories sold by the boutique



Majority of boutiques (35%) keep trendy and ethnic jewelry as this is one of the most popular accessory. Majority of the respondents said that they keep various accessories to attract customers and a variety can be made available to the customers.

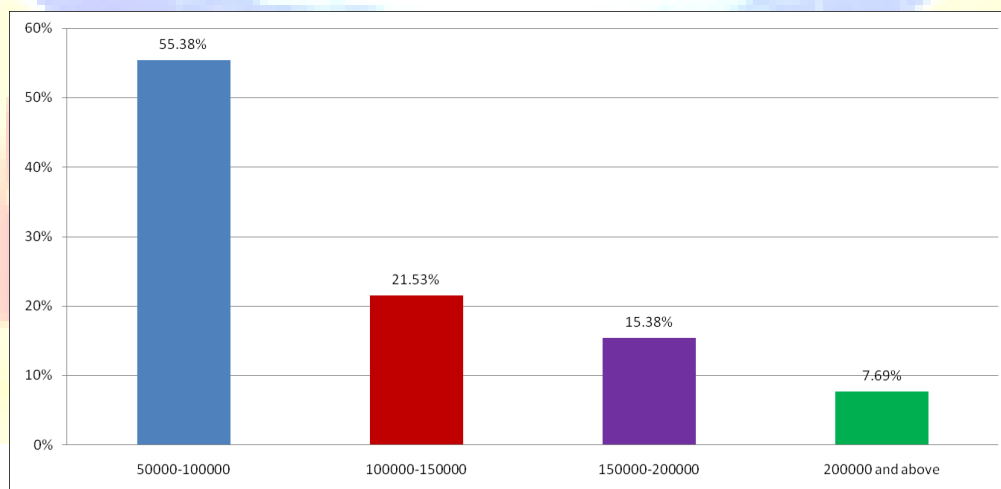
Table 8: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of amount spent in setting up the boutiques



Majority of boutiques (54%) had spent from Rs 75,000-99,000 in setting up the boutiques as this is the minimum amount required to set up a boutique. Only 5% of boutiques which opened on a large scale had spent from Rs 2,00,000 and above.

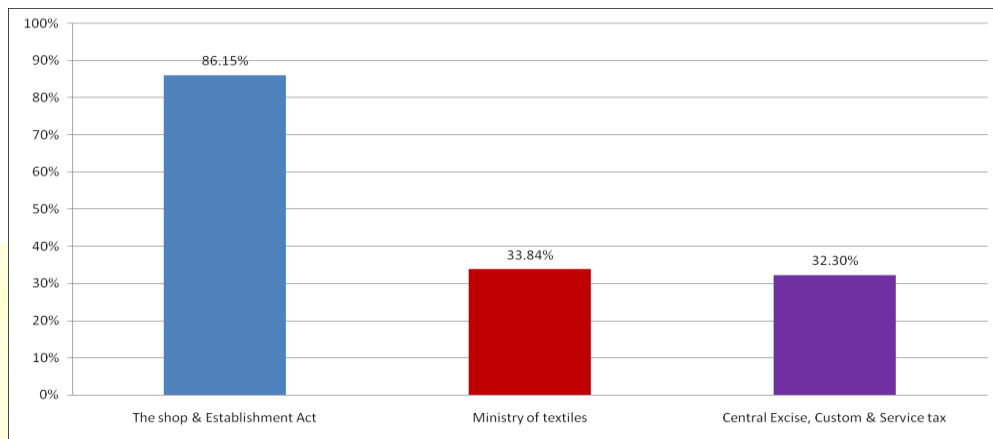
Table 9: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of net profit earned by the boutique in a month

n=65



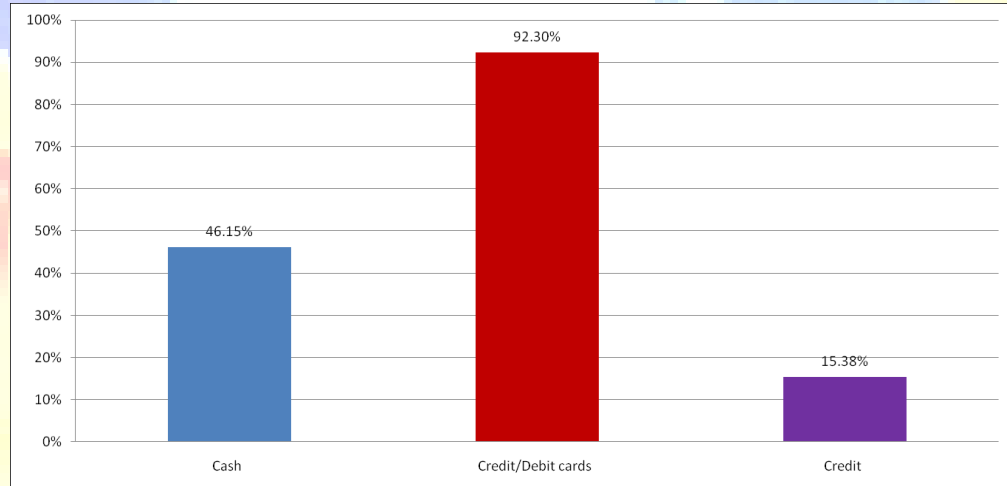
Majority of boutiques (55%) earn Rs 50000-100000 lakh as these boutiques were long established and had a regular clientele. 8 % boutiques earn from Rs 200000 and above as these boutiques were renowned and work on large scale and they also export and import their goods.

Table 10: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of various Government bodies under which they are registered n=65



Majority of boutiques (86 %) were registered under shop & establishment act as it is a mandatory act. Only 32% of boutiques were registered under Central Excise, Custom & Service tax as they export and import their goods.

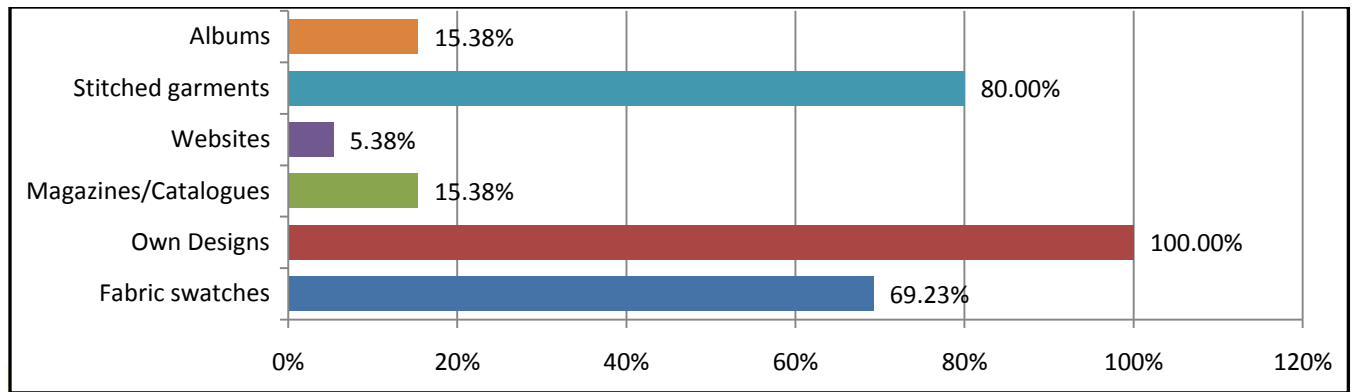
Table 11: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of mode of receiving payment n=65



Majority of boutiques (92%) accept credit/debit cards as it is a convenient mode to receive payments. 15% of boutiques give credit facility to their regular customers.

Table 12: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of tools used to convince the client about the designs

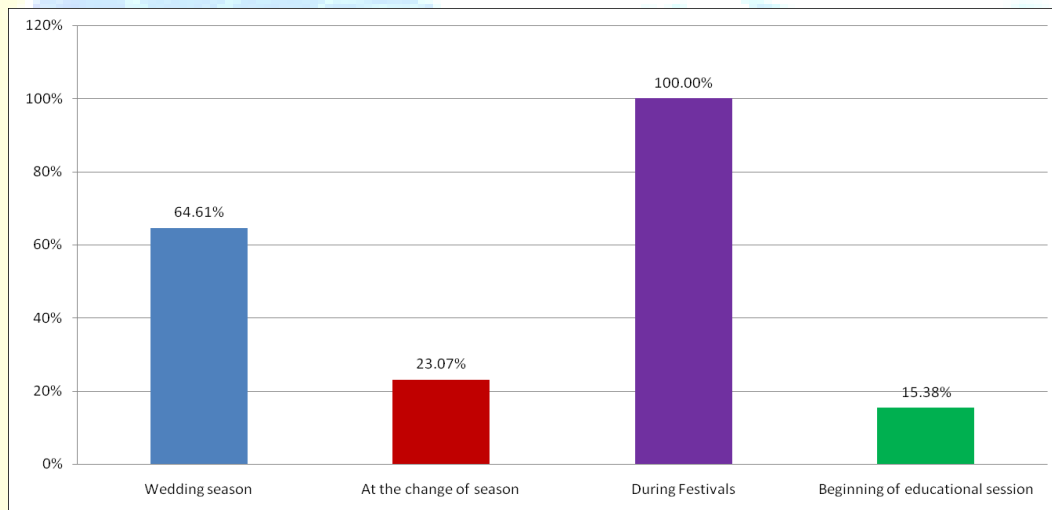
n=65



All the boutiques (100%) show their clients their own designs which the in house designers have created. 15% of boutiques use various magazines, catalogues, websites and albums each to convince the clients to place the order.

Table 13: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of peak sale seasons

n=65

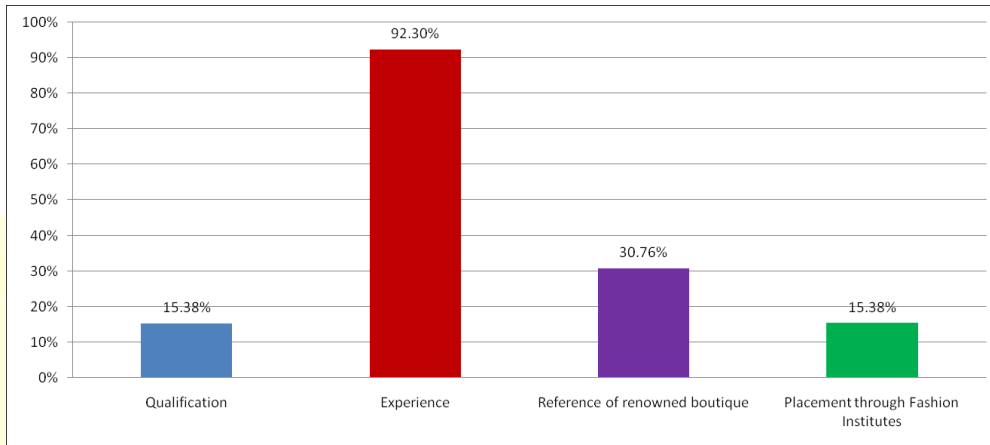


All the boutiques (100%) said that their sale increases during festivals. 64% of boutiques said that their sale also increases during wedding season.

Section –II-Detail of Workers

Table 14: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of criteria for recruitment of workers

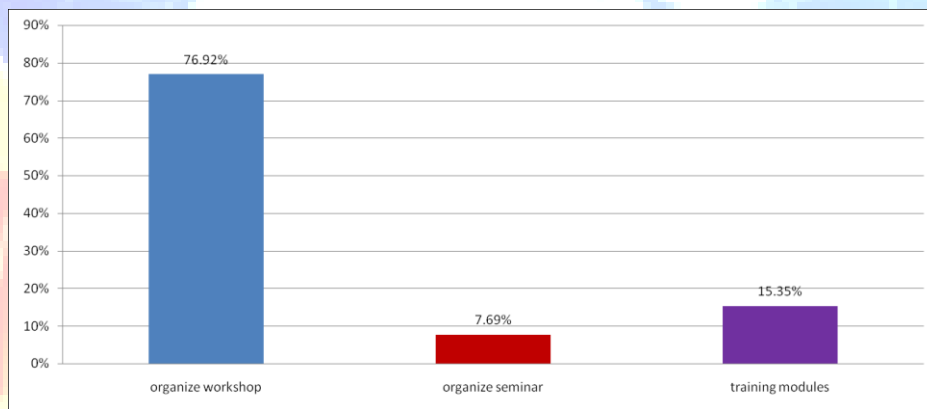
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Majority of boutiques (92%) prefer hiring experienced labour as “more the experience better the skills”. Only 15% of boutiques recruit their workers according to their qualification and also make direct placement through fashion institutions.

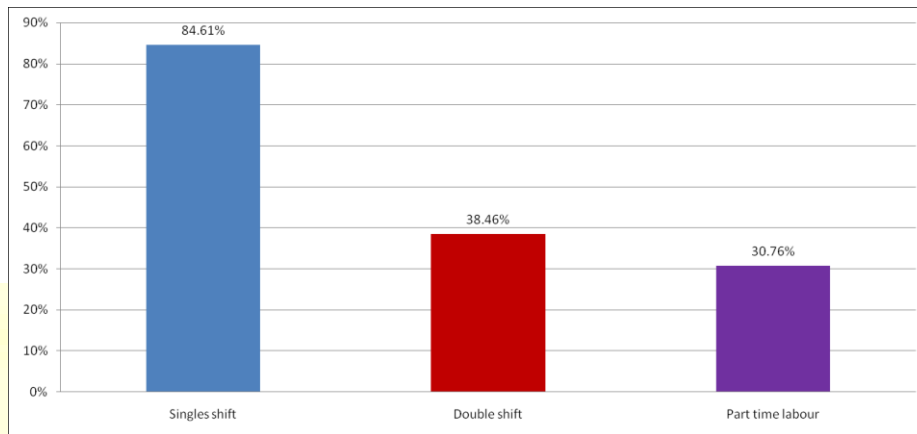
Table 15: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of skilled orientation of the workers

n=65



Majority of boutiques (77%) organise workshops for skilled orientation of the workers so as to show them latest trends. 8% of boutiques organise seminars for their workers.

Table 16: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of working hours of their workers

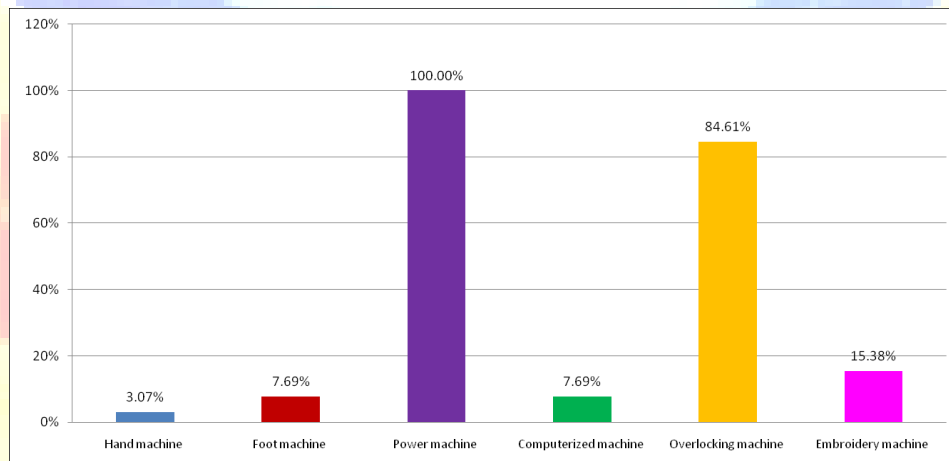


Majority of boutiques (85%) had single shift for their workers and they work for 8-10 hrs per day as it is recommended by labour law and the workers were paid monthly . 31% of boutiques also appoint part time labour during peak seasons and the workers were paid per piece.

Section III-Equipments, Raw material, Processes

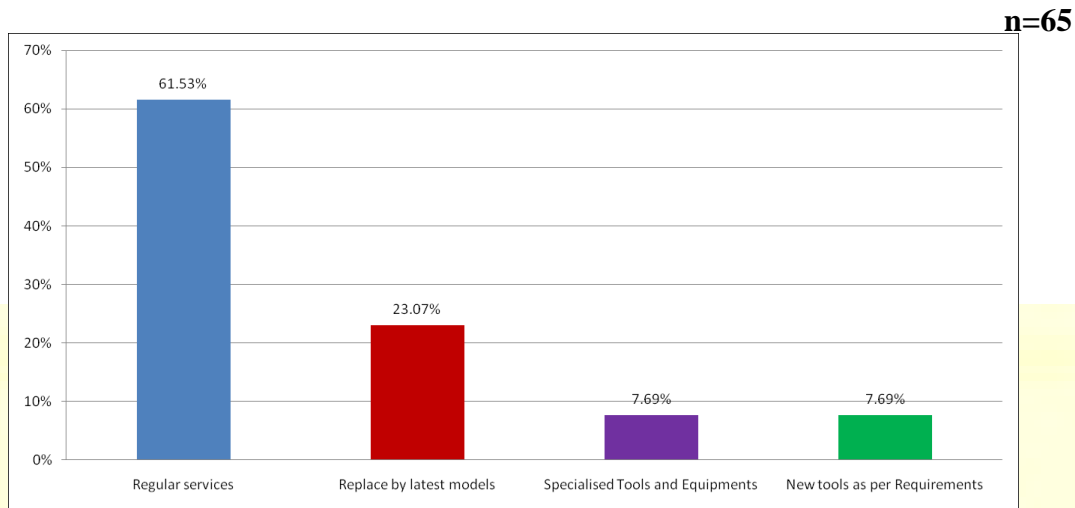
Table 17: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of types of machine used by the boutiques

n=65



All the boutiques (100%) used power sewing machine as both hands are free to manipulate work and these machines consume less time as compared to foot and hand machine. 3% of boutiques also had hand operated sewing machines as it had limited functions and slow to use as compared to foot and electric machine.

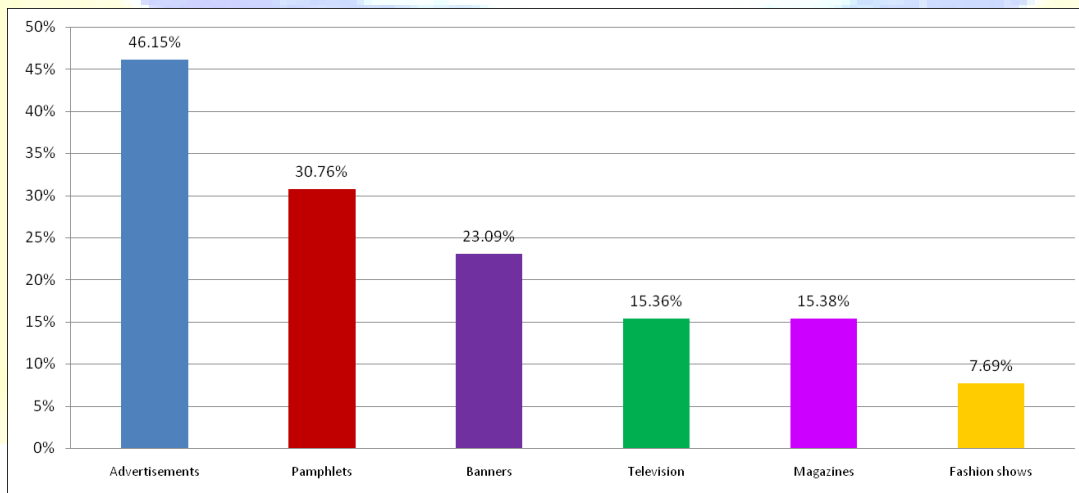
Table 18: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of maintenance of their Equipments



Majority of boutiques (62%) give regular services on monthly basis for maintenance of their equipments. 8% use new tools as per requirements.

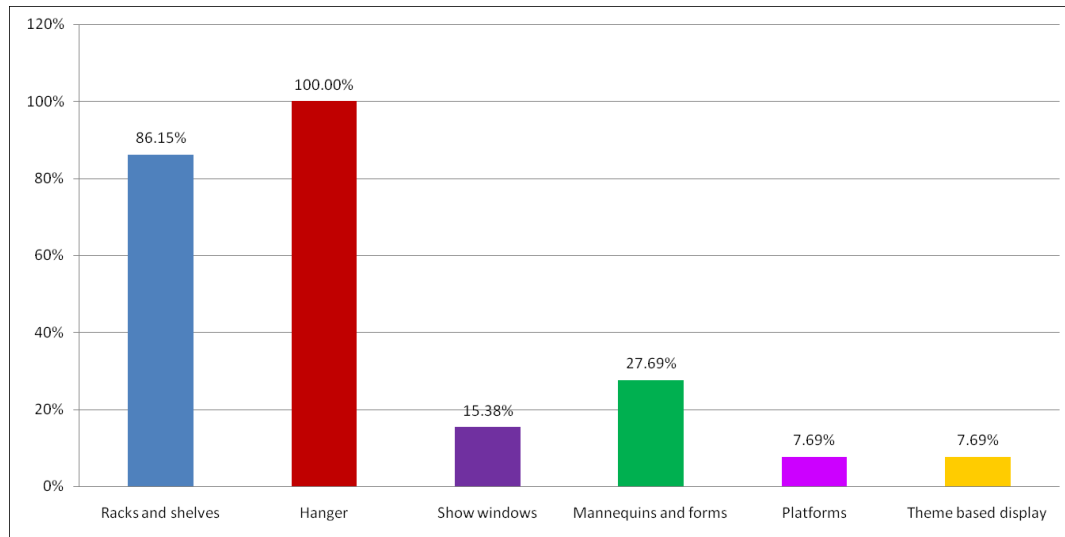
Section IV- Sales and Promotion Techniques

Table 19: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of sales promotion technique used by the boutiques



Majority of boutiques (46%) use advertisements as the main sale promotion technique. They advertise in newspaper as well as online as it is an effective tool of communicating with masses. 8% of boutiques organize fashion shows to attract fashion lovers.

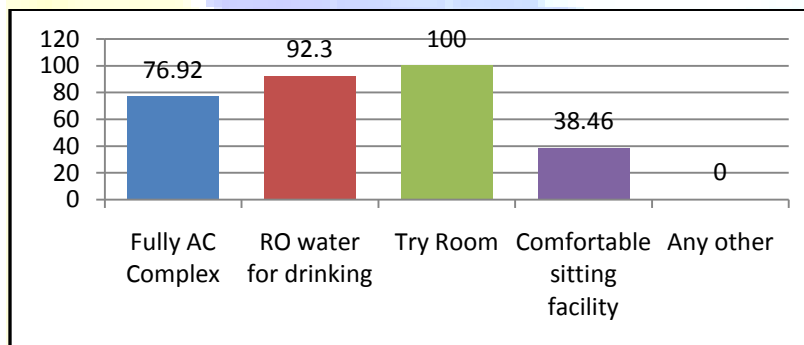
Table 20: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of visual display of their merchandise



All the boutiques (100%) display their merchandise on hangers to catch the customer’s eye and attention.

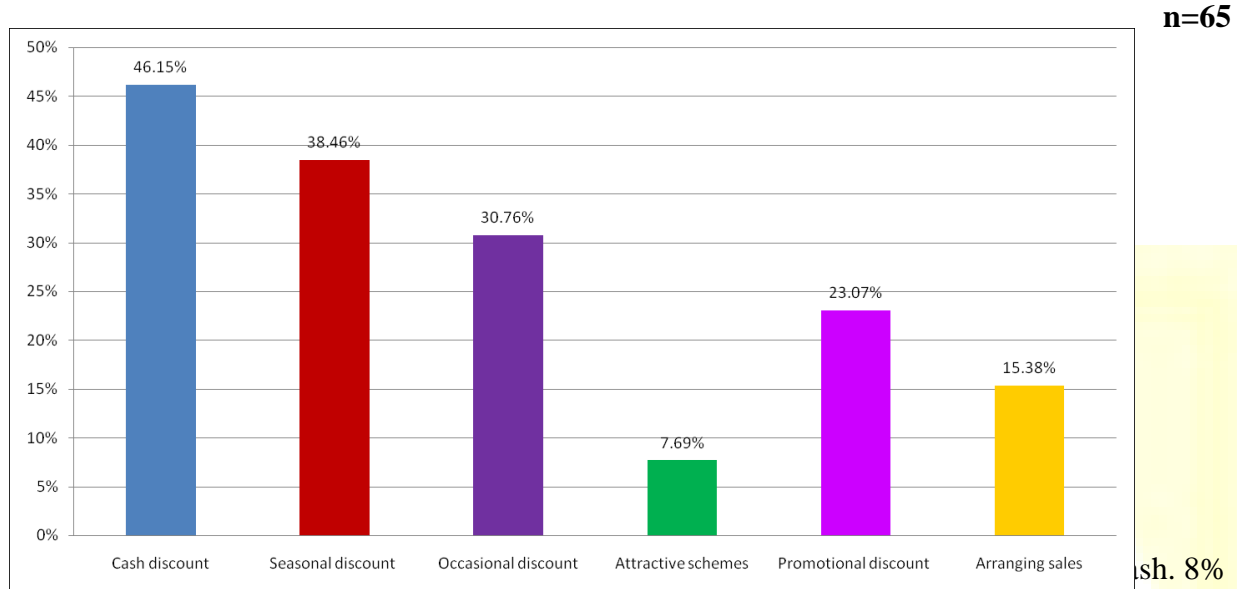
Table 21: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of facilities provided for the customers by the boutiques

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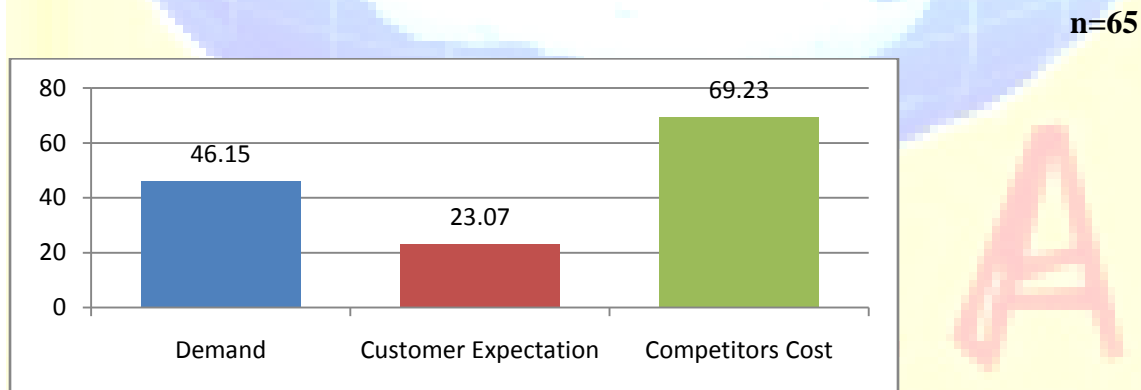
All the boutiques (100%) had the provision of try room . 92% of boutiques provide RO water for drinking . 38% of boutiques had a provision of comfortable sitting facility for the customers as the area in the boutique is very limited

Table 22: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of discount offered by the boutiques



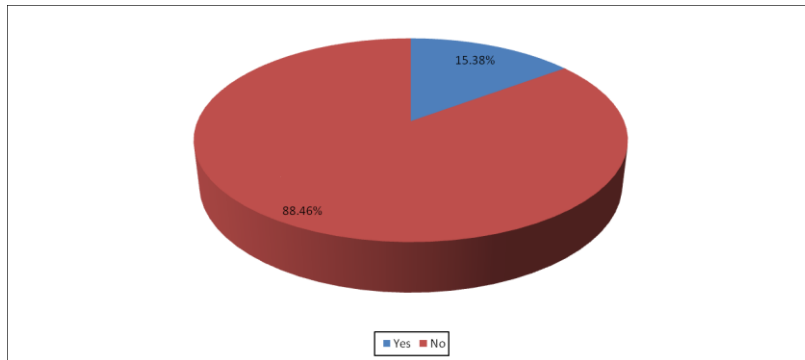
of boutiques offered attractive schemes to promote business and to clear stocks.

Table 23: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of factors which affect their profit margin



Majority of boutiques (69%) keep in mind the competitor's cost and accordingly increase or decrease their profit margin. 23% of boutiques said that they profit margin may vary because of customer's expectation.

Table 24: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of export of goods

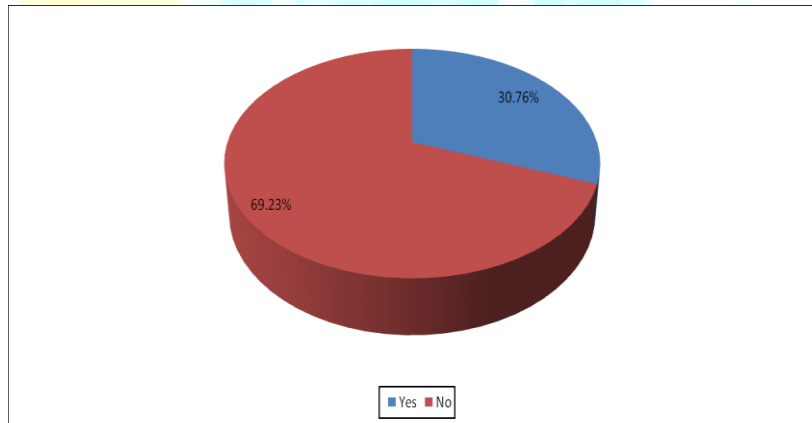


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goods as they had fixed clientele to meet their requirements.

15% of Boutique export their

Table 25: Distribution of boutiques on the basis of import of goods



Majority of boutiques (69%) do not import as the cost of products become very high and the product is not saleable in Indian markets whereas 31% of boutiques import their products like purses, hand bags, evening gowns as they were much in demand in their country.

CONCLUSION

Whether consciously or unconsciously, fashion & clothing play important roles in our daily lives & so does the designers who design these clothes. There is an abundance of Indian designers who are reliant on the domestic market. In India, designers have developed as fashion brands & have real potential to become international brands. Though the industry is regarded as a sunshine segment for the overall apparel market, it is grappling with issues like recognition in the international market and financing options for budding designers. Another factor which hinders

the growth is that the designs get copied and thus more and more fashion designers have started seeking copyright protection and are getting their designs registered. Government should sponsor exchange programs between domestic and international fashion institutes to enhance Indian designers' potential and bring India on the global fashion map, making it a prominent fashion capital of the world.

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SIGNIFICANCE

1. The study on “designers’ boutiques of Hauz Khas village in New Delhi” gives an in-depth view of the blooming fashion industry.
2. The study provides us the information about the infrastructure as well as the various marketing strategies of designers’ boutiques.
3. It not only help various budding designers to have the insight of this sunshine fashion industry but also familiarize them with its grappling issues like lack of strong brands and lack of financing options for them.