

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The interest that Indian women showed in ornamentation and aesthetic expression through their costumes has been documented well. It is pertinent to understand the messages that they conveyed through their sartorial preferences which is documented in various forms sculptures, scriptures, literature, paintings, costume archives, cinema, media –advertisements and magazines etcetera. Each community and ethnic group maintained unique characteristics, which become symbols of recognition and identification and served to establish their cultural affiliation.

Central to this was the Indian woman who was the symbol of patriarchal society. She combined both the functions of being the nurturer and protector of her household and cultural ethos of the society. The woman was as important part as the man; of the Indian society, which embraced both the indoor and outdoor roles within the social-cultural paradigms of the community.

The span of evolution of Indian women's costume, especially the draped version, the sari has undergone immense changes, however to interpret the semiology of the era bygone is rather complex; as one can attempt to understand and decode the tacit meaning through the lens of current observation only. Since the people who shared the ancient set of rules or code for contextual reading that enables us to connect the signifier with the signified are not present, this will prove to be delimiting.

The Indian fashion scene began receiving its due credibility and attention from 1980's onwards and gained the industry recognition in 21st century: hence this research focuses on new millennium to understand the Indian Fashion System. The new millennium has seen revolutionary change across the socio-economic diaspora of India due to humongous efforts of the past and the globalization. The Indian women are seeking higher education, step-up from their conventional role as homemakers, mothers, wives along with a professional life and social life independent of the family, due to personal interests and inclinations. The information technology has brought the world closer and sudden economic growth has given the Indian women a great emancipation in terms of their sartorial practices. As these new Indian women gear to take on various social and professional roles and lifestyle changes, they have embraced new garments in their wardrobe to meet these roles. The Internet and

satellite television not only provides the information on latest world fashion trends but also an access to it even in tier 2 cities of India by means of online E-commerce portals and tele-shopping.

The present study explored the semiology of the fashion apparel as a larger domain of study to understand the theories and case studies put forth by researchers and theorists of the fashion system. This comprehensive learning helped in further interpretation of the semiology of the sari, in the context of the contemporary period of the study.

For the present study the Indian sari is treated as garment for contemporary use where mode of draping, accessories and styling have been studied; references have been collected using primary research tools like focused group discussions with experts. The collection of personal or family pictures also media imagery for in-depth observations. Personal interview schedules with survey respondents representing various geographic locations, age groups, educational & economic backgrounds and professions. The study also aimed to reveal the influencing factors for the change and developments in the Indian fashion system especially in this heritage draped garment, the sari.

The findings of the study have been stated and discussed in the following subsections:

4.1 Phase I) Review of Literature

4.2 Phase II) Focused group discussion.

4.3. Phase II) Interpretation of the survey for all 3 groups.

4.3.1. Survey Monkey Results for women from various industry sectors and middle and upper middle class backgrounds.

4.3.2. Survey Results for women from lower income class.

4.3.3. Survey Results for men respondents.

4.3.4. Comparisons of findings from all the phase II survey data from all 3 groups

4.4 Phase II) Decoding Photographic references and case studies

4.5 Phase III) Analysis of data and model development

The findings of the Phase II are all inter-related to the objectives of the study and are further interpreted for each objective and models are developed for the Indian fashion system.

4.5.1 Understanding the semiology of fashion apparel.

4.5.2 The semiotic meaning of the Indian sari with the changing role of women in society.

4.5.3 The semiotic interpretation of the Indian sari by trade organizations / industry and designers.

4.5.4 Interpreting the semiotics of the sari for trend mapping.

4.5.5 Analysis of the semiotics and interpretation of the Indian fashion system.

4.1 Phase I) Review of Literature

The key findings from multi-discipline researches in area of anthropology, socio-psychological aspects of clothing, sociology, psychology, semiology of fashion, non-western fashion, historical references and evolution of the sari and fashion in India, business and trend reports of the sari industry were interpreted. This was helpful in meeting the objective and brought deeper understanding about the semiology of fashion apparel. It has been explained in detail later on in 4.5.1 on page no.160.

For this research the study of Indian costume traditions and cultural practices around the Indian sari revealed several variations in design through the influence of the socio-cultural ethos and local environment in its totality. The review was crucial for this study, where it provided the background and justification for the research undertaken. All the relevant research was summarized and further evaluation of the collated work was commenced. Analysis was undertaken to study the relationships between different researchers' work, and their relevance to the present study was established. Very few; yet in depth studies were undertaken with the socio-psychological aspects of the Indian sari, this involved visiting libraries of various academic institutions and online journals, research papers and private photographs.

The reference of various theories, qualitative research methods for case studies on fashion and dress adopted worldwide. Literature focusing on the background, relevance and history of the Indian sari, semiotics of fashion apparel and semiotic theory also formed the basis of formulating the methodology for this study. This led to further stages of the study where primary information elicited from the respondents were analyzed in Phase II and Phase III.

A large number of fashion scholars and costume historians have researched on the non-western fashion, semiology of fashion, fashion systems, case studies on other fashion systems from the non-western countries. Semiotic theories, nonverbal communications by the ethnic fashion systems; these accounts were studied and they formed a vital part of the secondary research to gain insight on the semiotic meanings conveyed by fashion apparel and interpreted by the onlooker. These studies were examined in detail and sari preferences were analyzed to understand their evolution to the present styles and factors that affect these preferences. Comparisons were drawn with other sartorial practices. Apart from studying the links of these sartorial preferences across cultures and regions, similarities in nonverbal meanings conveyed was interpreted.

4.2 Focused group discussion:

The discussion was recorded on video and used for further analysis for the objectives of this study. The panelists were engaged in an engrossed conversation based on questions pertaining to the objectives of the study. The well involved and interactive audience for the panel discussion included a diverse group; textile curators, sari enthusiasts, connoisseurs, experts, designers, fashion students, entrepreneurs, academics etcetera. The focused group discussion was conducted on 10 May 2016 between 6.00 to 8.00pm.



Plate 4.1 : Focused group discussion with Expert Panelist (from right to left): Rta Kapur Chisti, Padmashree Wendell Rodricks, Vaibbhavi Pruthviraj Ranavaade, Bhamini Subrmanium , Nandita Abraham, Karishma Shahani Khan

After the initial introduction of the focused group discussion and the panelist, the panelist gave their responses to the below questions.

1. The Indian sari has continued to be worn for almost 5000 years, please share the most iconic instance about the sari story for you.

Textile scholar, Rta Kapur Chisti opined that sari was something about identity, being traditional. It was a way of remembering where we came from and paying a tribute to a garment; which is conceived in 2 dimensions of warp and weft on the loom and worn in three dimensions as draped garment. It is an ingenious garment in a country which is 10 months warm and one or two months of good weather. What is ingenious is that it is capable, unlike the kimono of constant recreation and reinvention, it was not static. At the Sari School she teaches the basics of sari draping and 40- 50 minute audio visual on patterning of the woven sari, the pattern gives the weight to the sari borders and *pallu*; *pallus* and borders have a functional purpose. She said that the chiffon saris fly about so much, hence need a piping border at bottom and quoted an example of the Hermes' chiffon sari. She also stated that the greatness of India was that people shared differences of world view and yet shared them with lightness and laugh together; which should not be lost.

Minimalist Designer Wendell Rodricks liked the Sari from the beginning of his career and mentioned that throughout his journey as designer, tutor, robust researcher and revivalist of the Goan Kunbi Sari, he has done some path breaking work of re-forestation and cultivating the natural dye “*manjestha*” (Madder – red pigment dye derived from roots) and indigo, reviving the handloom traditions and applied his unique design sensibilities to reinvent the “Wendell Rodricks’ *kunbi sari* ” which is white with *ikkat* accents of red and black, weighs about 500gms, as he felt curvy Indian women , who he referred as “voluptuous goddesses” should not feel the weight of the sari. Wendell opined that the sari is a “very intelligent garment” as it was invented to give length with the pleats, goes around on bias and hugging voluptuous Indian hips with a big cascade at the back which cuts the hips to half. Wendell quoted the regal and trailing style of sari drape which was first worn by Helen; Greek wife of Chandragupta Maurya found favor even today, though there were other practical draping styles for the working classes.

Bhamini Subramaniam bought up the topic of titillation and cited the example of 80’s bollywood film “*Sagar*” in which Dimple Kapadia draped in red hot chiffon sari, doing the needful in sensuous manner being clad in 6 yards of the sari, unlike the scantily clad women in Bollywood in 2016. She shared her family pictures and her bridal pictures during the rituals of the Tamil wedding and comfort with traditional values and aesthetic, also her creative gratification through her design journey for fashion lines.

Karishma Shahani Khan, young designer spoke about a relatively latent acknowledgement of the sari in her school days, however she drew inspiration from her Indian heritage textiles and sari when she worked on her graduation collection in UK and continues to be the signature for her label quirky Ka: sha.

2. Decoding of meaning conveyed by apparel to the observer will be helpful in understanding the needs that apparel fulfill. What is the purpose of wearing the sari from your domain point of view? Share one example about the sari explorations in your work life. (The panelists were requested to carry some examples of their work for sharing and enhancing audience engagements and were assisted with student models or dress forms).

Wendell shared the Goan story of red sari during weddings which was forbidden due to Portugese inquisition and conversion to Christianity, hence the bride had to wear white gown for the wedding , and the next day after the wedding when the bride comes to her father's house to bid final farewell she is empowered by the red sari which is called the *Pottuna* (similar to the Manglorean tradition) , however with time red sari was replaced with a red frock which could be made of mill made synthetic fabric. He also shared another Goan tradition where the local deity *Shanta Durga* (incarnation of *Durga*, but is quite unlike the forceful *Durga*) was offered the most exquisite saris and once a year, all these saris which were once offerings to the goddess were given out to women at a notional cost; who cherish these saris and wore them on auspicious occasions. He also shared some light hearted moments about peculiar sari draping practices and overtly embroidered saris which he referred as "cactus saris" due to their abrasive surface textures.

Bhamini shared that the woven cloth was considered sacred, maintaining the sanctity of the cloth, it was offered in *pooja* to seek blessings and touching a bit of turmeric to the corner (may be for medicinal benefits too) and then one seeked blessings of elders so that you may have more saris to wear and abundance.

Chisti mentioned her exchanges with renowned mythologist Devdutta Pattnaik, and said that new myths are created by us every day and they would become mythology of tomorrow and that was the greatness and continuity for the spring of life in India. Wendell added by quoting poet Sardesi saying that history has to become mythology to stay alive, something that resonates that we use it as history but put it into a mythological context.

Bhamini also compared the skilled craft of weaving to a perfect classical musical composition, where you innovate and bring something new to this beautiful draped garment which looks nice on all women and one size fits all, it covers as much as it hides and is very comfortable.

Bhamini and Karishma shared their experiences working with respective craft clusters and how handloom weaving needed to be more economically sustainable for the weaver, which would eventually lead to craft sustainability and emphasis on

importance of eco- sustainability, was also led in the engaging discussion with audience too.

3. What needs to be done to the make the Indian sari relevant for changing lifestyles? Is it more difficult for young women to wear Saris in India today, what are the advantages of wearing the Sari?

Karishma commented that people were forgetting to be themselves and wanted to be dressed like what some “brand” was selling and asked people to take her clothes and suggested them to wear them in their own unique way, also wondered when a sari stopped being a sari and transformed into something else, when someone drapes a sari as dhoti., which she found interesting. Today people were getting stitched, pre stitched clothes, and it was important to tell young people that there was only that much you could do, while draping a sari gave multiple options. She felt that there was a lot more education on the sari and it was an integral part of Indian woman’s wardrobe, more Indian women would wear a sari to weddings or an event as one got more comfortable and adapted to wearing the saris, which were lighter and airy. Bhamini suggested that younger women needed to be given sari consciousness in family, media, colleges and importance of heritage and be complimented for the beautiful turnout in a sari.

Wendell shared that when he came back to India from Paris he observed two popular aesthetics: the opulent **Rajasthani Maharaja look** in wedding scene, it was saddening to see the loss of heritage and culture and to see lahenga-choli in a south Indian & Bengali weddings and the **Bollywood kitsch**, fashion. So he decided to go with peace of south Indian temples, *yoga*, *ayurveda* in his minimalism inspired work. He suggested that we search inside and find the essence of where we were especially at times of weddings and celebrations because we were the only country in the world which had the legacy of more than 4000-6000 years of wearing our legacy. He applauded the audience for keeping the legacy of the sari alive in varied hues and varieties of saris.

Chisti mentioned a sense of displacement and that we had given up settling, we had given up the ability to think and reflect, also the ability to stand for oneself, its ability

to show ones assets and not short comings in the body. This imitative phase was going and hierarchy was built into human beings, we could give the best in terms of equal opportunity but the outcomes would be based on capabilities, which one could see in our own families. She mentioned her interest in spinning process as it was very unique to India and could give the characteristic texture to silks and cottons. The skill level required for weaving was much higher, however many more people could hand spin. Hand spinning process, *khadi* provided this unique texture; which was the rationale of using *khadi*, as well as employment , atleast 20 people were required for the process of cleaning, combing, carding and spinning to support a single handloom. She urged the audience if one could appreciate chiffon for its smoothness, learn to appreciate the unique texture of cotton for roughness. She mentioned the hybrid organic cotton was very smooth and the Chinese silk too, leading to a very uniform yarn which did not give sufficient weight and texture to the fabric to be draped as sari; the sari stood like a ship in that case. She discouraged long term grants rather recommended push starts to weavers for a sustainable growth and self-supporting economy and also said its time for designer to go back to fabric. This is how the real industry structure could be established. She said that the distinguishing feature about the sari was its structure: the body, two borders and *pallu*. She gave a very interesting demonstration about the different measures, dimensions and constructions of the varied saris, also some interesting sari draping styles.

4. In the Post Modern era, the sari has found new meaning for the Indian women across geographic and socio-economic strata. Your reflections on the sari in today's India story (different psychographic profiles).

Bhamini mentioned the women in Indian villages may still have handloom saris but lot of them have moved to mill made saris, and gave an example of **bandhani** (a traditional fabric tie and dye technique) print on mill made sari. The city women wore a sari with an attitude to express their style, she described the two predominant classic looks were the chiffon and pearl elegance in the business community and handloom sari in the elite and educated classes. The affordable imitations for both the looks as well as Bollywood interpretations were available for the urban working class and now it had reached the rural centers too.

Nandita Abraham said that in India people bought a lot of silk saris when someone was getting married, and recommended need for bringing saris in daily wear; people often told her that it was difficult to wear a sari, but she found it very easy to wear a sari and said that familiarity would make it easier.

On the topic of cultural acceptance Wendell brought a very pertinent perspective about Indian school education that hardly had Indian history, Indian sciences of *Ayurveda* and *yoga*, craft traditions etcetera, this needed to change for better awareness. The history of various saris needed to be taken into account, just speaking of the contemporary may not suffice and awareness at grass root level at home, school and media would be impactful. Bollywood's influence on fashion styles is evident so he said it could prove to be a game changer if Deepika Padukone (leading Bollywood actor) wore a handloom sari.

5. The sari segment/industry is not a sunset industry. Will the Sari remain an integral part of wardrobe, despite the decrease in number of sari clad women in daily wear? The Indian sari as work formalwear will be more evident in comparison to the western suit. If yes then according to you describe what will it be like?

Nandita Abraham senior corporate professional, expressed that she started wearing a saree after her mid-forties when she switched gears from academics to the corporate world and realized the need to assert her femininity as a woman leader, in a sari at work amongst her peers who were predominantly men wearing suits and she took strong corporate leadership roles. Her change in dressing was acknowledged by her eleven year old son on her birthday cake saying, "*Amma* (Mother) you are a sari not suit!"

Chisti said that the sari was going up in board rooms of MNC's in India, a lady went to the Bank of America in her slacks/dress and kept a sari in her office closet, and draped it before a meeting, the lady mentioned that when she wore a sari, she was taken more seriously. Another sector which Chisti mentioned was the courtrooms, where the black coats which were very heavy and discomforting; the sari was an ideal way to let the air in and flow for the tropical weather in India.

6. Will the sari continue to be a part of Indian women's bridal trousseau? If yes then according to you what will it be like ?

More Indian women will wear sari only for the festive & formal occasion and will evolve to become the western equivalent of an evening gown.

In a special video interview for this study, fashion designer and social activist Shaina NC, advised the brides to be that sari was a natural option, as one could cut it, and make *lehenga* later, and endorses a sari over a *lehenga* which could be worn 2-3 times, while a sari could be reused in multiple ways and there was an added advantage to a sari; on special occasions it was the only garment that made one look the best. She added that sari was by far the most sensuous garment in world and could make a thin girl look voluptuous and a fat woman look sensuous. Rather than limiting the sari as an Indian costume, it needed to be promoted to international platform where it was an option to a cocktail gown, a twisted sari, sari worn on leggings or *ghaghra or chudidhar* with bustier, double sari. Most importantly all Indians needed to promote the sari as a national costume and as an international option to couture dressing. It was very unfortunate that we waited for Jemima Khan, Liz Hurley, Sherry Blair, Zandra Rhodes to wear the sari and say wow!, when it was right here, where it belonged to us and , must be explored in its varied dimensions by every single Indian. She emphasized that the sari was an option to western gown, but a better option.

The Panel agreed that sari would surely be worn by Indian brides, and Wendell quoted a person named Christian Patel, who styled NRI weddings in Ahmedabad, who had a rate card for sari draping from 4 pins, 6 pin, 18 pin to 24 pin sari; the cost increased with the number of pins and the sari would not move. Bhamini mentioned that the pinned sari or a semi stitched sari may have practicality, but it made the sari very stiff and she would not recommend a cut and sew sari. Chisti mentioned that there should be no "should" in dress, as dress is never a moral question, however shared the struggle of keeping up the bustier and not tearing a pinned up sari.

7. Innovation in the sari design has been helpful in reaching out to a larger population of women. Comment, "The Neo Sari" variants like "the divided trouser sari", "Sarini" (bikini sari), "Sarong sari", and "Gown sari" are an assault on Indian sartorial aesthetics or can they co-exist? The *Nivi* style sari

draped represents modernism, post-modern avatar of the sari will be more revealing; a celebration of the wearer's body.

The panel unanimously agreed that it could co-exist. Chisti mentioned that there should be no "should" in dress, as garment or dress is never a moral question; it was something that you felt comfortable in, that you felt yourself in. Bhamini also welcomed the new sari versions and said that they may lure the youngsters to the sari and educating them about the cultural heritage, learning about own culture and also learning to compare cultures would bring more acceptance.

Wendell said that it was inappropriate to use "Indian Couture", couture is French word and legacy, he emphasized that the western world had seven pieces of apparel to play with: skirt, frock, blouse, red carpet gown, trousers, cocktail dress and evening gown. In India we had an emporium of clothes and textiles in each state; they also quoted openness of sharing ideas and techniques across the world.

Towards the end the parting thought that the moderator/ researcher shared was that on one side we were talking about sustaining a heritage draped the sari and the heritage craft tradition of handwoven textiles and its merits, while synthetics are coming in. One side we were sustaining a draped on the other hand maybe trailing on heritage weave, this was a thought to ponder upon!

Then the session was opened for audience interactions and the questions were around Bollywood styling, where limited costume budgets led to using imitation textiles. It was an honor and an enriching experience to moderate the focused group discussion on "**the Essence of the sari**", and each panelist brought an interesting perspective and captivated the audience in the sari story. Unanimous agreement was reached that sustaining cultural heritage of the sari and unfolding the new interpretations in times to come would take us a long way and build a fascinating eco system for the sari traditions.

4.3 Phase II) Interpretation of the survey for all 3 groups.

4.3.1. Survey Monkey Results for women from various industry sectors and middle and upper middle class backgrounds.

4.3.2. Survey Results for women from lower income class.

4.3.3. Survey Results for men respondents.

4.3.4. Comparisons of findings from all the phase II survey data from all 3 groups

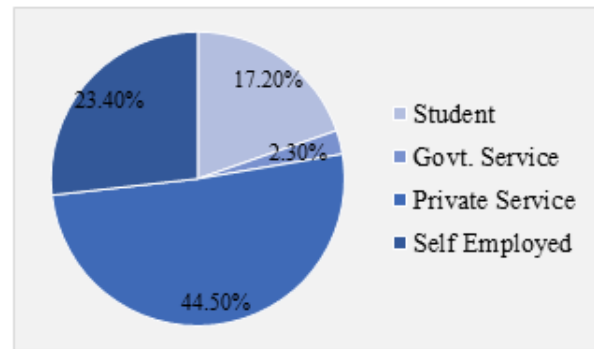
4.3.1. Survey Monkey Results for women from various industry sectors and middle and upper middle class backgrounds.

The results of women respondents from middle and upper middle class group are analyzed below. Of the 300 questionnaires duly submitted online on survey monkey form by the respondents, 44 were discarded due to incomplete data. The remaining 256 were considered for the present study. While the sample size of 256 was theoretically far from ideal the universality of certain responses regarding present sari preferences coming from women of widely divergent professional backgrounds, means that findings are likely to be applicable far beyond the sample. In regard to the sample, the respondents were all educated.

Preliminary Information:

1. The snowball method of sampling and the online tool of data collection responses from respondents pan India, as well as few respondents currently located overseas in U.K. America and Middle East were included for this study.
2. With regard to profession of the respondents; majority 44.7% of the respondents were working in the private service, 23.4% were self-employed, 17.2% students, 12.5% homemakers and only 2.3% were in Government Service.

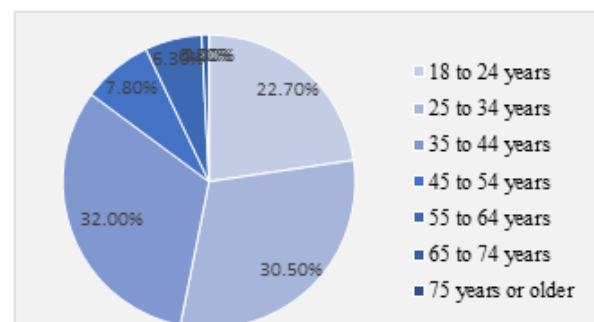
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Student	17.2%	44
Govt. Service	2.3%	6
Private Service	44.5%	104
Self Employed	23.4%	60
Homemaker	12.5%	32
	100%	256



Graph 4. 1 : Distribution of the profession of the middle and upper middle class women.

3. Majority of respondents (32 %) were in the range of 35 to 44 years, remaining in the descending order were in the range (30.5 %) of 25 to 34 years, (22.7 %) of 18 to 24 years, (7.8 %) 45 to 54 years, (6.3 %) 55 to 64 years, (0.8%) 65 to 74 years and (0 %) none were in the range of 75 years and above.

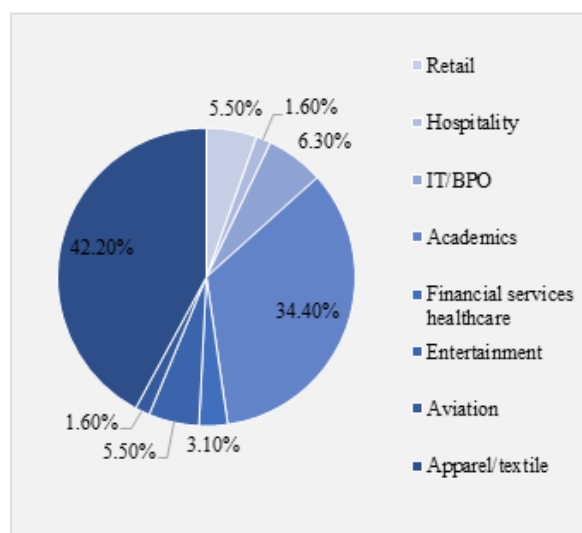
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
18 to 24 years	22.7%	58
25 to 34 years	30.5%	78
35 to 44 years	32.0%	82
45 to 54 years	7.8%	20
55 to 64 years	6.3%	16
65 to 74 years	0.8%	2
75 years or older	0.0%	0
	100%	256



Graph 4. 2 : Age range of middle and upper middle class women

4. In industry sector the highest number of respondents (42.3%) were from the Apparel/textile field, followed by (34.4 %) academics sector, whereas few were from Retail and Entertainment sector, financial services, aviation and hospitality sector .

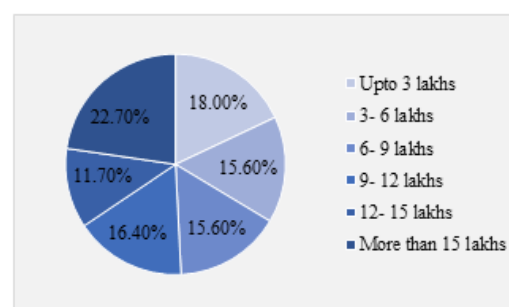
What is your industry sector?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Retail	5.5%	14
Hospitality	1.6%	4
IT/BPO	6.3%	16
Academics	34.4%	88
Financial services healthcare	3.1%	8
Entertainment	5.5%	14
Aviation	1.6%	4
Apparel/textile	42.2%	108
	100%	256



Graph 4. 3 : Distribution of industry Sector of middle and upper middle class women.

5. Highest percentage of respondents (22.7%) having annual income more than 15 Lakh INR, remaining in the descending order (18.0 %) up to 3 Lakh INR, (16.4%) in the range of 9-12 lakh INR, 3-6 Lakh INR, 6-9 Lakh INR and lowest percentage in the range of 12- 15 lakh INR.

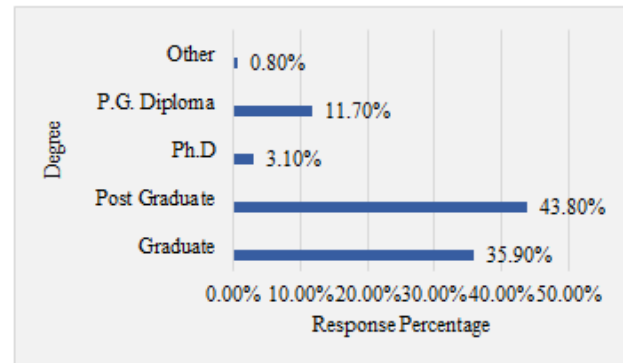
What is your approximate average household income in Indian Rupees?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Upto 3 lakhs	18.0%	46
3- 6 lakhs	15.6%	40
6- 9 lakhs	15.6%	40
9- 12 lakhs	16.4%	42
12- 15 lakhs	11.7%	30
More than 15 lakhs	22.7%	58
	100%	256



Graph 4. 4 : Distribution of annual household income of middle and upper middle class women.

Highest percentage of respondents (43.8%) had the educational qualification of Post-graduation, followed by (35.9%) graduates, (11.7%) PG Diplomas and very few who had passed H.S.C. , completed Ph.D. and other qualifications.

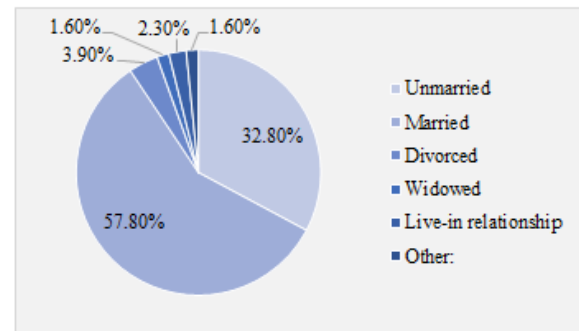
What is highest degree you have received?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
H.S.C	4.7%	12
Graduate	35.9%	92
Post Graduate	43.8%	112
Ph.D	3.1%	8
P.G. Diploma	11.7%	30
Other	0.8%	2
	100%	256



Graph 4. 5 : Education level of middle and upper middle class women.

6. Marital status of majority 57.8% of respondents was married, 32.8% were unmarried, and very few were divorced, in a live-in relationship, widows and few indicated any other.

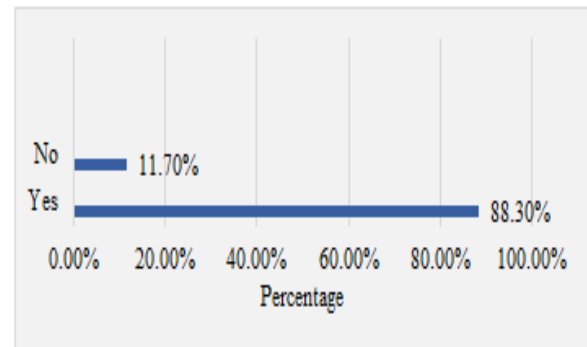
Please confirm your Relationship Status		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Unmarried	32.8%	84
Married	57.8%	148
Divorced	3.9%	10
Widowed	1.6%	4
Live-in relationship	2.3%	6
Other:	1.6%	4
	100%	256



Graph 4. 6 : Marital status of middle and upper middle class women.

7. A good majority of (88.3%) respondents wore saris and (11.7%) very few respondents do not wear sari, yet have indicated interest in the Sari and diligently answered the whole survey. Those surveys which were incomplete have not been included for the study.

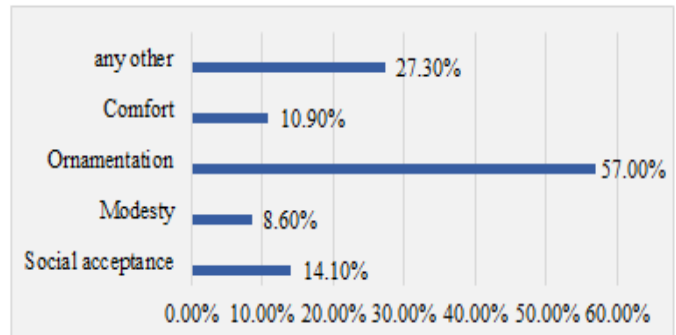
Do you wear Saris?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	88.3%	226
No	11.7%	30
	100%	256



Graph 4. 7 : Preference for wearing sari by middle and upper middle class women.

8. The purpose of wearing the sari indicated by (57.0%) majority of respondents was ornamentation, remaining indicated any other, social acceptance, comfort and the least number indicated modesty.

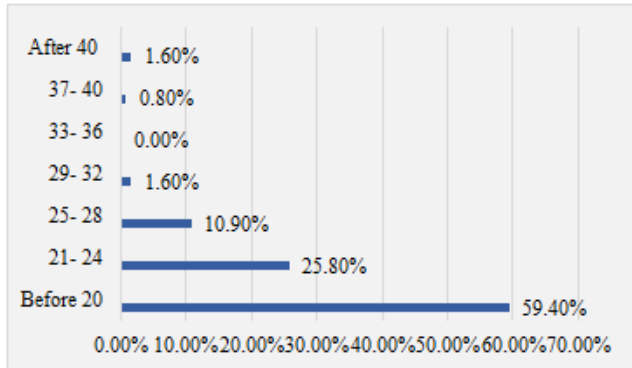
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Social acceptance	14.1%	36
Modesty	8.6%	22
Ornamentation	57.0%	146
Comfort	10.9%	28
Any other	27.3%	70
	100%	256



Graph 4. 8 : Purpose of wearing sari by middle and upper middle class women.

9. Majority (59.4%) of the respondents started wearing the sari before the age of 20 years, remaining started wearing it between 21-24 years, 25-28 years, 29-32 years , after 40 years of age, very few started wearing it between 37-40 years and none of the respondents started wearing the sari between 33-36 years of age.

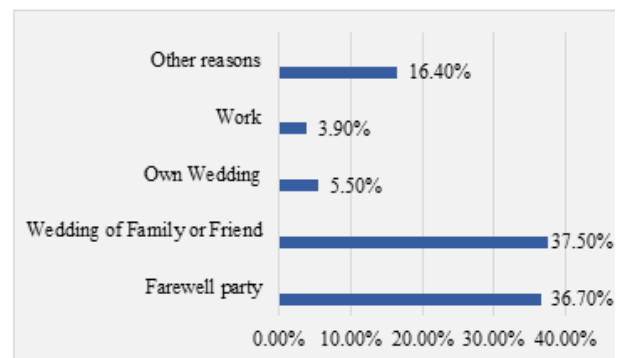
At what age did you start wearing Saris? Mention here in years		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Before 20	59.4%	152
21- 24	25.8%	66
25- 28	10.9%	28
29- 32	1.6%	4
33- 36	0.0%	0
37- 40	0.8%	2
After 40	1.6%	4
	100%	256



Graph 4.9 : Age of wearing sari for the first time by middle and upper middle class women.

10. The occasion for wearing the sari for the first time for maximum respondents (37.5%) was for wedding in the family or friends' wedding, followed closely by (36.7%) farewell party at school or college, remaining (16.4%) indicated any other ;gave varied reasons like after marriage, festivals or offering *pooja*, dress code, love for sari, wedding proposal meet, sari day etc.(5.5%) Few wore it first time on their own wedding day and few also the first time to work.

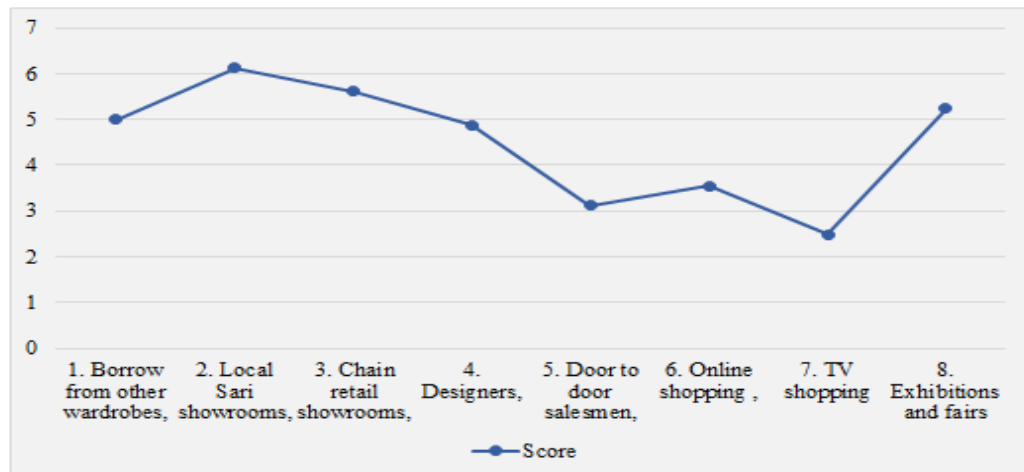
What was the occasion and reason to wear it for the first time?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Farewell party	36.7%	94
Wedding of Family or Friend	37.5%	96
Own Wedding	5.5%	14
Work	3.9%	10
Other reasons	16.4%	42
	100%	256



Graph 4. 10 : Occasion and reason to wear sari for the first time by middle and upper middle class women.

11. Ranking for preferred source for sari buying indicated the highest score for local sari showrooms, followed closely in the descending order by chain retail showrooms, Exhibitions and fairs, borrowing from other wardrobes, designers, online shopping , from door to door salesman, and least by T.V. shopping.

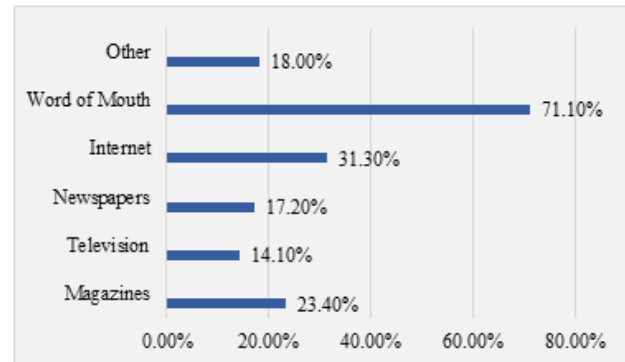
From where do you source/buy your saris? Please rank them according to your preference from 1-8?												
Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Score	Response Count	Ranking	
1. Borrow from other wardrobes,	28	26	10	7	13	16	10	18	639	256	4	
2. Local Sari showrooms,	42	23	26	15	8	3	5	6	785	256	1	
3. Chain retail showrooms,	16	30	25	26	17	8	3	3	719	256	2	
4. Designers,	10	11	27	30	23	15	6	6	624	256	5	
5. Door to door salesmen,	4	7	4	8	16	35	31	23	399	256	7	
6. Online shopping ,	5	6	7	15	22	28	39	6	455	256	6	
7. TV shopping	3	5	7	3	13	12	28	57	317	256	8	
8. Exhibitions and fairs	20	20	22	24	16	11	6	9	670	256	3	



Graph 4. 11 : Sari buying behavior of middle and upper middle class women.

12. The majority of 71.1% of respondents got information for sari buying by the word of mouth, followed by the Internet, Magazines, few got information from other source, Newspapers, and Television.

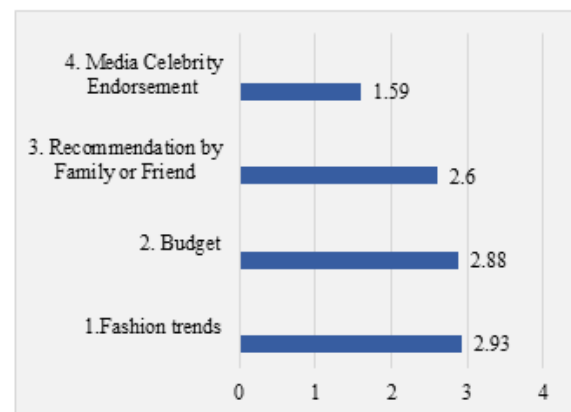
Where do you get information to buy Saris?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Magazines	23.4%	60
Television	14.1%	36
Newspapers	17.2%	44
Internet	31.3%	80
Word of Mouth	71.1%	182
Other	18.0%	46
	100%	256



Graph 4. 12 : Information sources for sari buying for middle and upper middle class women.

13. The ranking for factors influencing choice of sari indicated the highest score of 2.93 was for Fashion trends, followed closely by 2.88 for budget, 2.60 for recommendation by friend or family, and least score of 1.59 for Media celebrity endorsement.

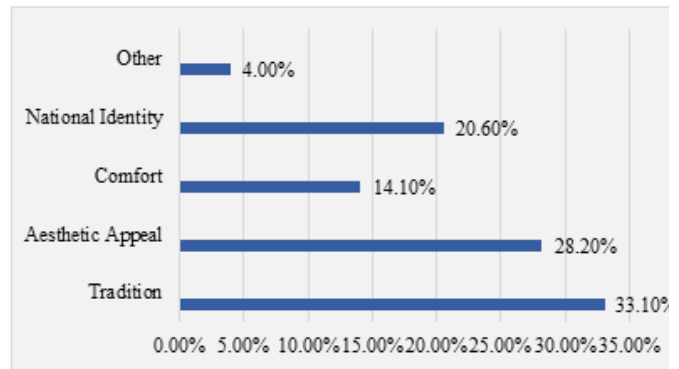
Answer Options	1	2	3	4	Score	Response Count
1.Fashion trends	46	37	35	10	2.93	256
2. Budget	39	48	27	14	2.88	256
3. Recommendation by Family or Friend	31	32	48	17	2.60	256
4. Media Celebrity Endorsement	12	11	18	87	1.59	256



Graph 4. 13: Factors influencing sari choice for middle and upper middle class women

14. The reasons for continuation of the Indian sari being worn for almost 5000 years the maximum responses were (33.1%) for tradition, followed in the descending order by aesthetic appeal, national identity , comfort, and only few for any other.

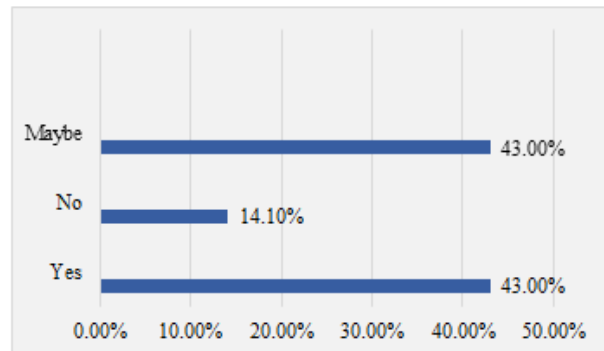
Why do you think the Indian Sari has continued to be worn for more than 5000 years		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Tradition	33.1%	164
Aesthetic Appeal	28.2%	140
Comfort	14.1%	70
National Identity	20.6%	102
Other	4.0%	20
	100%	256



Graph 4. 14 : Middle and upper middle class women respondents' reasons for continuation of Indian sari being worn for almost 5000 years.

Response to the Indian women maintaining their identity without the sari only 14.1% gave a negative response, and there was divided response that they would be able to maintain their identity whereas equal number were unsure and hence chose to be neutral. The average score of 3-Neutral was given by respondents when asked to indicate the importance of being accepted in the Indian Sari. (1 being least important and 5 being most important).

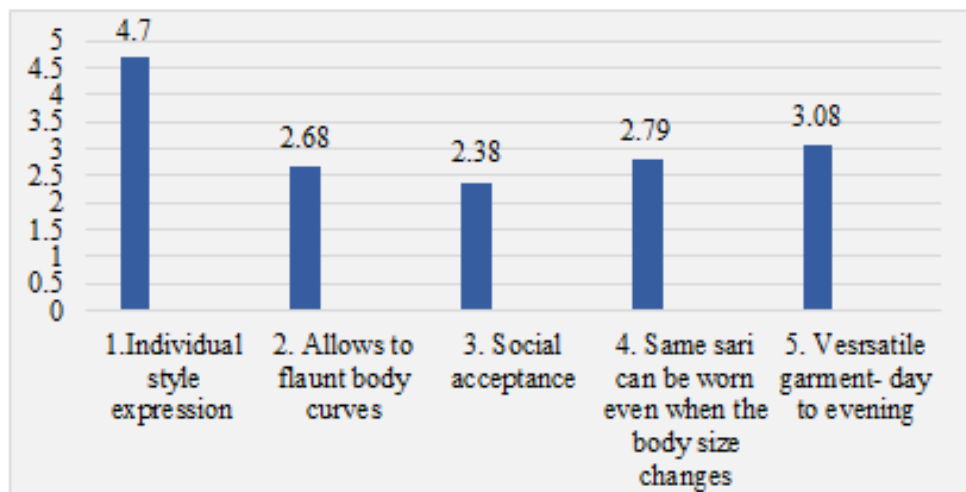
Would Indian women be able to maintain their identity without the Sari?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	43.0%	110
No	14.1%	36
Maybe	43.0%	110
	100%	256



Graph 4.15 : Middle and upper middle class women respondents' response to Indian women maintaining their identity without the sari.

15. The ranking for parameters indicating advantages of wearing the Indian sari, the highest score 4.7 for a. Individual style, 3.38 for c. Social acceptance, 3.08 for e. Versatile garment, 2.79 d. Same sari can be worn even when the body size changes, and least 2.68 for b. Allows to flaunt body curves.

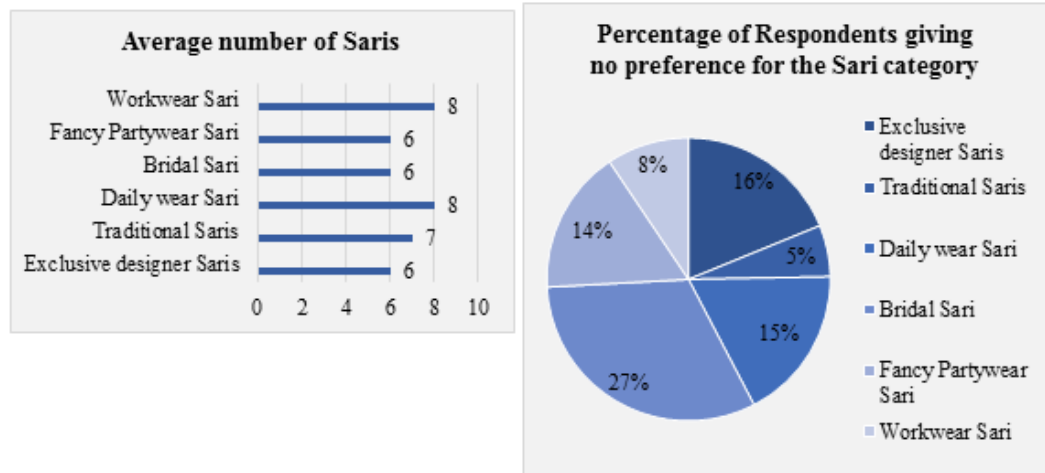
Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	Score	Response Count
1.Individual style expression	122	74	34	8	18	4.7	256
2. Allows to flaunt body curves	40	40	34	82	60	2.68	256
3. Social acceptance	24	36	48	54	94	2.38	256
4. Same sari can be worn even when the body size changes	28	36	88	62	42	2.79	256
5. Versatile garment- day to evening	42	70	52	50	42	3.08	256



Graph 4.16 : Advantages of wearing the sari for middle and upper middle class women respondents.

16. The results for the preferred number of saris for each category to cover all the requirements of the sari for an individual; the average score on number of saris saw the highest number 8 each for Daily wear and Workwear, average number 7 for Traditional saris, average number 6 each for all the remaining categories like Exclusive designer saris, Bridal Sari and Fancy Partywear sari.

In your opinion which all of the following categories and numbers in repeats of 5 to cover all the requirements of Saris for an individual			
Answer Options	Average number of Saris	Respondents giving no preference for the Sari category	Percentage of Respondents giving no preference for the Sari category
Exclusive designer Saris	6	42	16%
Traditional Saris	7	12	5%
Daily wear Sari	8	40	15%
Bridal Sari	6	56	27%
Fancy Partywear Sari	6	38	14%
Workwear Sari	8	22	8%
			100%



Graph 4.17) a. : Middle and upper middle class women respondents' preferred number of saris for each category to cover all the requirements of the sari for an individual.

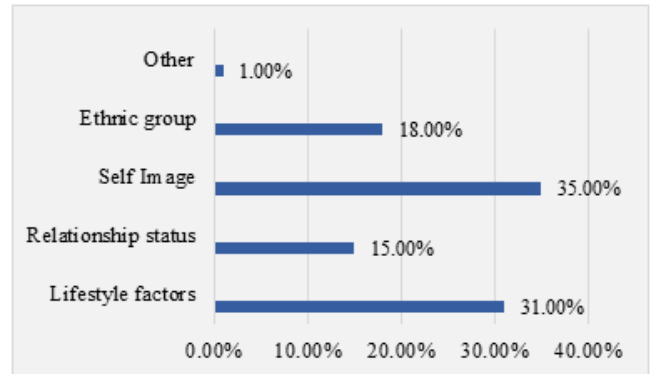
Graph 4.17) b. : Instances of middle and upper middle class women respondents giving no preference for at least one sari category.

However it was observed that 210 instances of respondents gave no preference for atleast one sari category. 27% of respondents gave no response to Bridal sari, 16% Exclusive designer saris, 15% Daily wear sari, 14% Fancy Party wear sari, 8% Work wear Sari and 5% Traditional saris. Thus it was inferred that despite the average score of the sari category though high, all women did not necessarily prefer saris in that category.

17. Results regarding relationship between the sari and factors of lifestyle change for middle and upper middle class women respondents indicated that; majority of

respondents 35% rated self-image as the highest, followed by 31% to Lifestyle factors, 18 % ethnic group and 15% Relationship status. There were other factors which the respondents thought were influential like Professional status, Family context, Mode of transport, politics, change in profession, type of work environment etcetera.

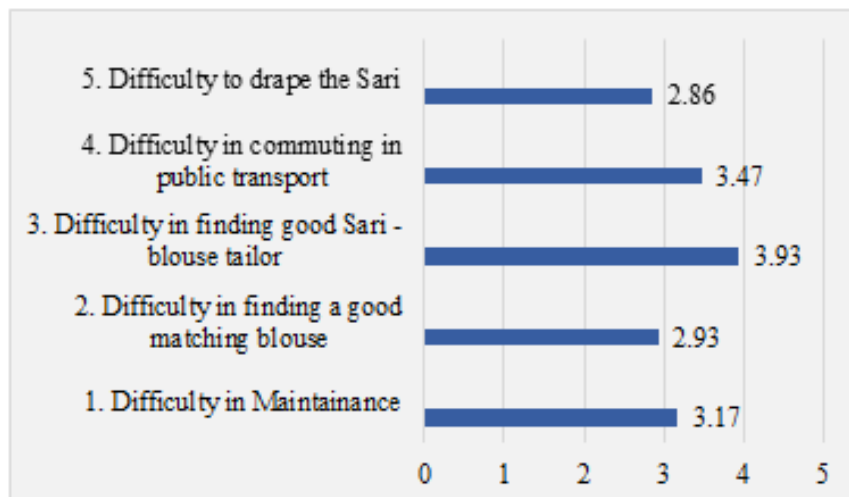
Which of the factors about changing lifestyle of Indian woman have a relationship with Sari she will wear?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Lifestyle factors	31.0%	120
Relationship status	15.0%	60
Self Image	35.0%	138
Ethnic group	18.0%	72
Other	1.0%	16
	100%	256



Graph 4.18 : Relationship between the sari and factors of lifestyle change for middle and upper middle class women respondents.

18. Ranking regarding difficulty in wearing the sari by the contemporary women saw the following scores, highest score 3.93 was for finding a good sari-blouse tailor, followed by 3.47 for Difficulty in commuting in public transport, 3.17 for Difficulty in Maintenance, 2.93 for Difficulty in finding a good matching blouse, and 2.86 Difficult to drape the sari. However a lot of respondents found one or more parameter not applicable to them. 37 respondents did not find it difficult to maintain saris and 21 did not find it difficult to find a good sari blouse tailor.

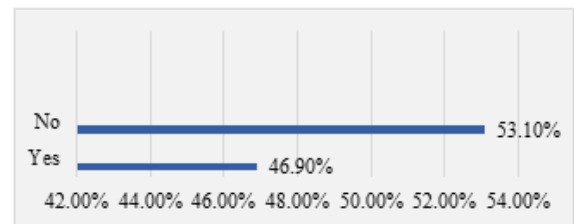
Being a contemporary Indian woman, have you faced any difficulties with wearing the Indian Sari? Rank the parameters from 1-5.								
Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	Score	Response Count
1. Difficulty in Maintenance	23	20	23	17	16	29	3.17	256
2. Difficulty in finding a good matching blouse	11	22	19	28	11	37	2.93	256
3. Difficulty in finding good Sari -blouse tailor	33	27	26	16	5	21	3.93	256
4. Difficulty in commuting in public transport	28	26	25	12	11	26	3.47	256
5. Difficulty to drape the Sari	20	15	15	22	23	33	2.86	256



Graph 4.19 : Difficulties in wearing the sari for middle and upper middle class women respondents.

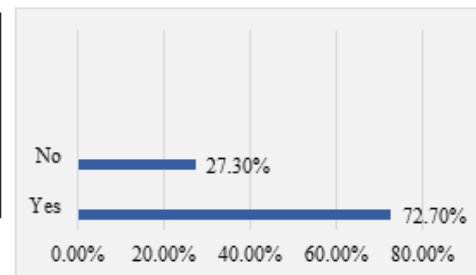
19. In response to reduction of the number of sari wearers in the coming years, majority 53.1% of respondents said number would not reduce; however 46.9 % said number would reduce. The responses were very close to each other. In response to sari remaining an integral part of the wardrobe 72.7% respondents were in favor and said it would remain and also suggested it could be the fusion style, classy, pre-pleated, or party wear: however only 27.3% thought that it would not be an integral part of the wardrobe.

In your opinion, will the number of wearers of Saris reduce in the coming years		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	46.9%	120
No	53.1%	136
	100%	256



Graph 4.20) a. : Middle and upper middle class women respondents' response to reduction in the number of sari wearers in the coming years.

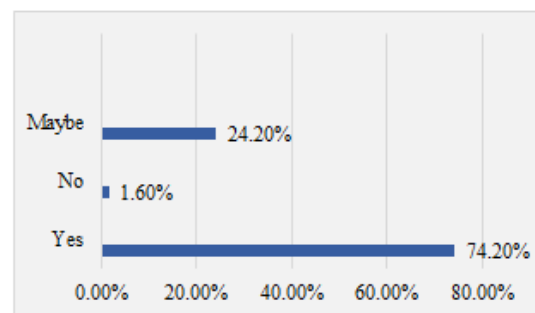
If Yes, will the Sari remain an integral part of the wardrobe?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	72.7%	186
No	27.3%	70
	100%	256



Graph 4.20) b. : Middle and upper middle class women respondents' response to sari remaining an integral part of the wardrobe.

20. In response to sari continuing to be a part of Indian women's bridal trousseau, majority 74.2% indicated it would continue and a miniscule 1.6% respondents gave negative response and 25.2% were unsure. Multiple responses for the future look of the Bridal trousseau sari were received ; majority said traditional and family heirlooms to keep the traditions and customs alive, some suggested *lehanga* and sari would co- exist, unusual new designer looks, some said it would not change and some said it could be pre-stitched.

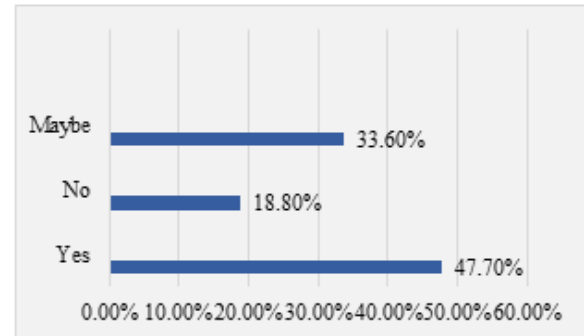
Will the Sari continue to be a part of Indian women's bridal trousseau?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	74.2%	190
No	1.6%	4
Maybe	24.2%	62
If yes then according to you what will it be like?		
Other(please specify)		68
	100%	256



Graph 4.21 : Middle and upper middle class women respondents' response to sari continuing to be a part of Indian women's bridal trousseau.

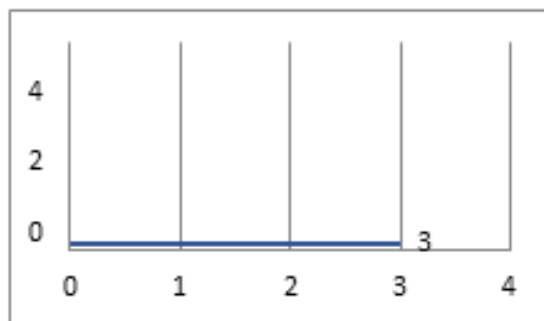
21. Response towards difficulty for young women to wear Saris in India today, majority (47.7%) found it to be difficult and the opinion was divided amongst the remaining respondents who found it easy or were not very sure. When asked the reasons for their response, multiple reasons were given which broadly were ; about not being used to wearing sari, busy lifestyle, comfortable, difficulty in commuting, draping, and maintenance.

Is it more difficult for young women to wear Saris in India today? Please provide as many reasons as you can think of.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	47.7%	122
No	18.8%	48
Maybe	33.6%	86
Reasons		118



Graph 4.22 : Middle and upper middle class women respondents' response towards difficulty for young women to wear Saris in India today.

22. In response to , "The Neo Sari" variants like "the Divided trouser sari", "Sarini" (bikini sari), "Sarong sari", and "Gown sari" are an assault on Indian sartorial aesthetics the average response was 3- neutral; on a 5 point scale where 1-totally disagree and 5-Totally Agree.



Graph 4.23 : Middle and upper middle class women respondents' response to "The Neo Sari" variants like "the Divided trouser sari", "Sarini" (bikini sari), "Sarong sari", and "Gown sari" are an assault on Indian sartorial aesthetics.

4.3.2. Survey Results for women from lower income class.

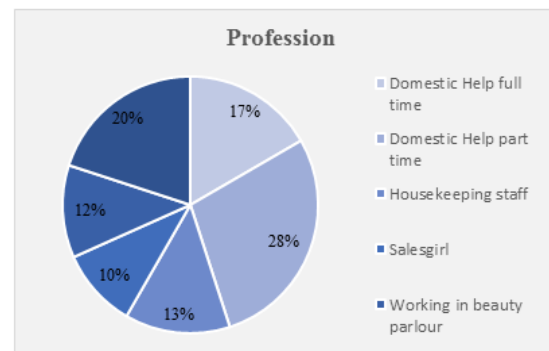
Since the earlier survey was not able to adequately cover the women from lower income groups, another survey was conducted using research assistance and documented using online Google forms, 60 responses are included in the results.

Preliminary information:

Majority of the respondent (28%) were working as part time domestic helpers, followed by full time domestic helpers, housekeeping staff, security staff, sales girls and beauticians in local parlors. Majority of the respondents (43%) were in the age range of 25-34 years. Majority (57%) of respondents were married, (23%) remaining were either unmarried or (20%) widowed.

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Domestic Help full time	17%	10
Domestic Help part time	28%	17
Housekeeping staff	13%	8
Salesgirl	10%	6
Working in beauty parlour	12%	7
Other	20%	12
	100%	60

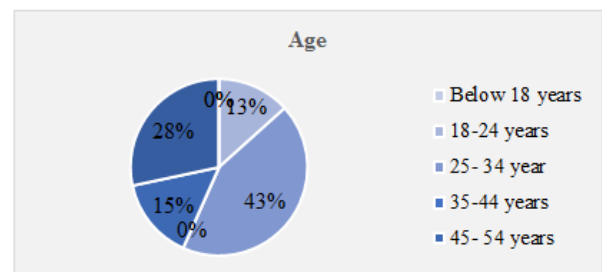
Profession



Graph 4.24 : Profession distribution of lower income group women respondents.

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Below 18 years	0%	0
18- 24 years	13%	8
25- 34 years	43%	26
35- 44 years	0%	0
45- 54 years	15%	9
55- 64 years	28%	17
	100%	60

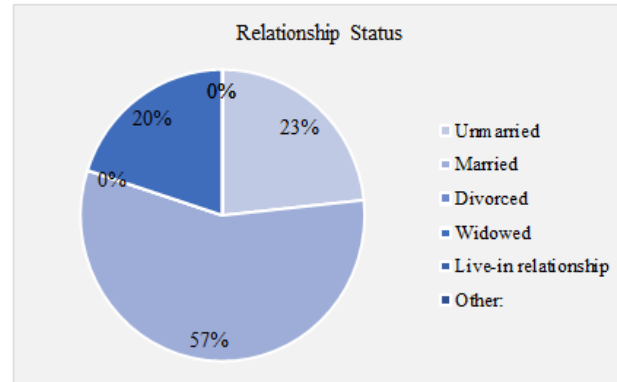
Age



Graph 4.25 : Age distribution of lower income group women respondents.

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Unmarried	23%	14
Married	57%	34
Divorced	0%	0
Widowed	20%	12
Live-in relationship	0%	0
Other:	0%	0
	100%	60

Relationship Status

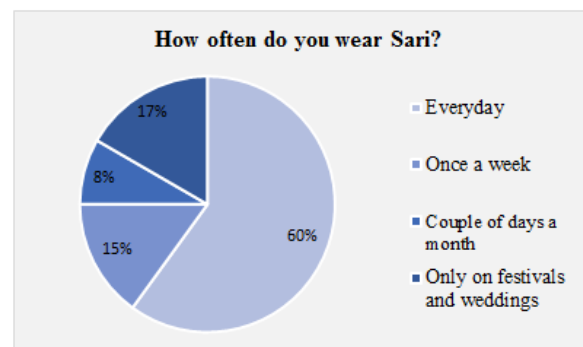


Graph 4.26 :Marital status distribution of lower income group women respondents.

Majority of (60%) respondents preferred wearing sari daily. The major reasons attributed for wearing the sari by (53%) respondents was social acceptance. Other reasons attributed for sari wearing were ornamentation (13%) and comfort (18%) by respondents from lower income group. Majority of (72%) respondents preferred wearing sari to work and the major reason they stated was that they found it to be comfortable and 28% did not prefer to wear the sari to work, because they found difficulty to work wearing a sari.

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Everyday	60%	36
Once a week	15%	9
Couple of days a month	8%	5
Only on festivals and weddings	17%	10
	100%	60

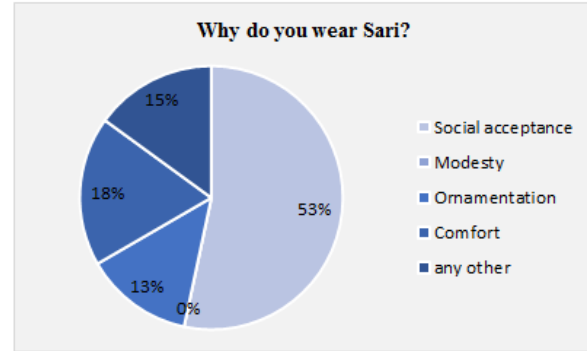
How often do you wear Sari?



Graph 4.27 : Frequency of sari worn by lower income group women respondents.

Answer Options	Response percentage	Response count
Social acceptance	53%	32
Modesty	0%	0
Ornamentation	13%	8
Comfort	18%	11
any other	15%	9
	100%	60

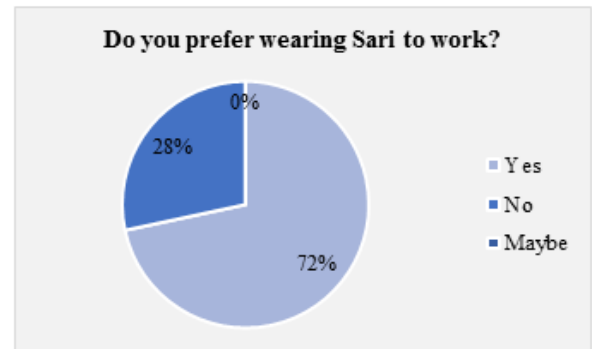
Why do you wear Sari?



Graph 4.28 : Reasons for wearing sari by lower income group women respondents.

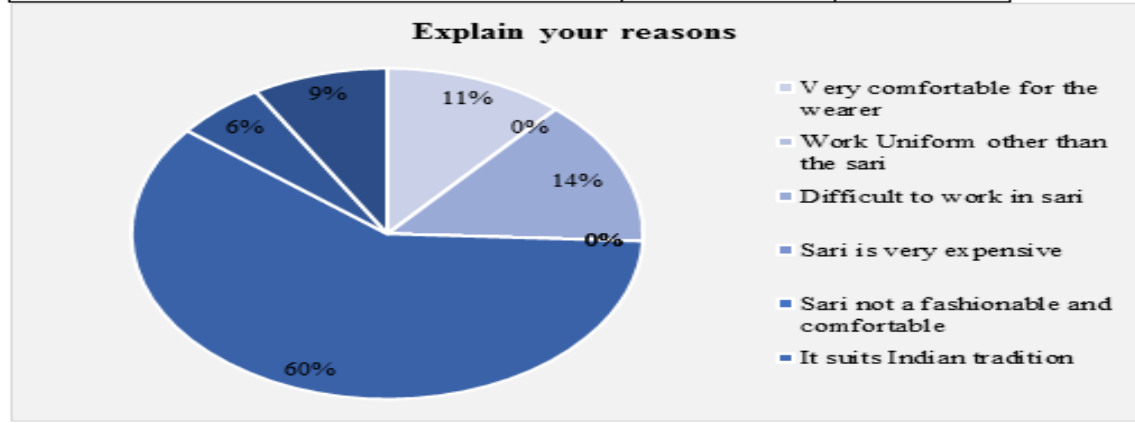
Do you prefer wearing Sari to work?

Answer Options	Response percentage	Response count
Yes	72%	43
No	28%	17
Maybe	0%	0
	100%	60



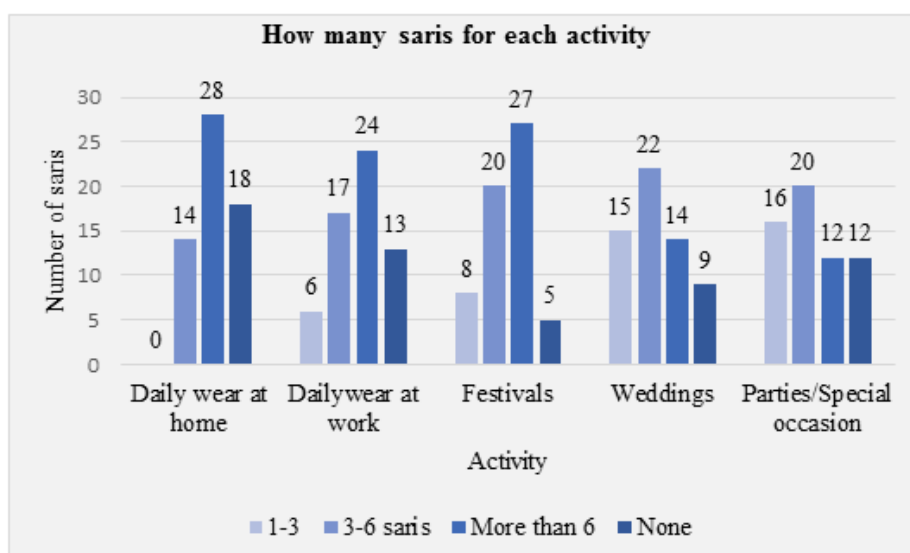
Graph 4.29) a. : Preference of wearing sari to work by lower income group women respondents.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very comfortable for the wearer	11%	4
Work Uniform other than the sari	0%	0
Difficult to work in sari	14%	5
Sari is very expensive	0%	0
Sari not a fashionable and comfortable	0%	0
It suits Indian tradition	0%	0
Its a very graceful draped garment	60%	21
Its very sensuous drape	6%	2
Other:	9%	3
	100%	35



Graph 4.29) b. Reasons for preference of wearing sari to work by lower income group women respondents.

Majority of the respondents had more than 6 saris for daily wear at home & work also for festival. Majority of women had 3-6 saris for weddings and party wear. However percentage of party wear saris being more than 6 and none at all was the same. Therefore it is difficult to ascertain the popularity of the partywear sari for this group. Majority of respondents preferred to wear synthetic sari for daily wear at home and work. Majority of respondents preferred to wear light weight shiny sari with zari embroidery for festivals and parties. Majority preferred to wear heavy silk (or artificial silk) with zari embroidery for weddings. It may have been influenced by the traditional Maharashtrian woven bridal saris.

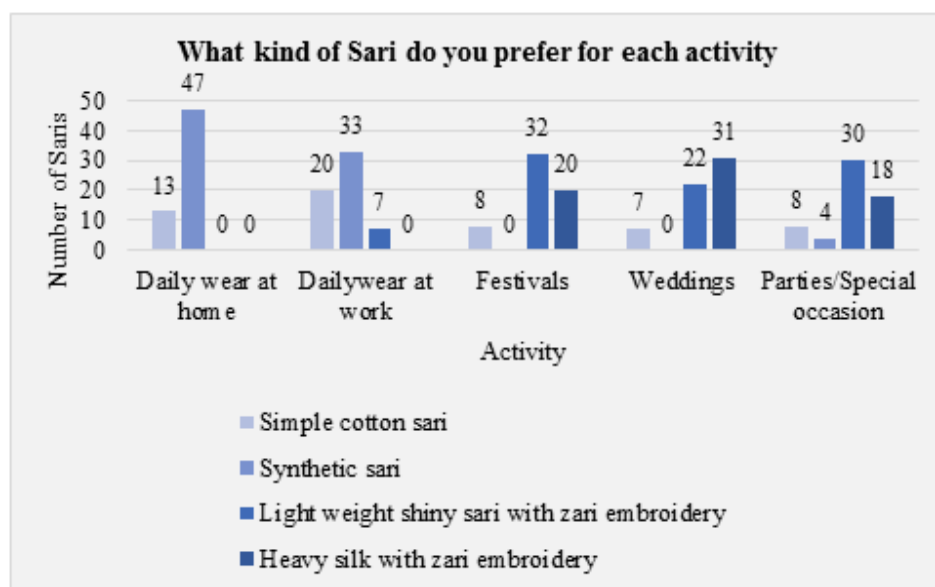


How many saris do you have for each activity?	1-3 saris	3-6 saris	More than 6 saris	None
Daily wear at home	0	14	28	18
Daily wear at work	6	17	24	13
Festivals	8	20	27	5
Weddings	15	22	14	9
Parties/Special occasion	16	20	12	12

Graph 4.30 : Preferred number of saris for each activity by lower income group women respondents.

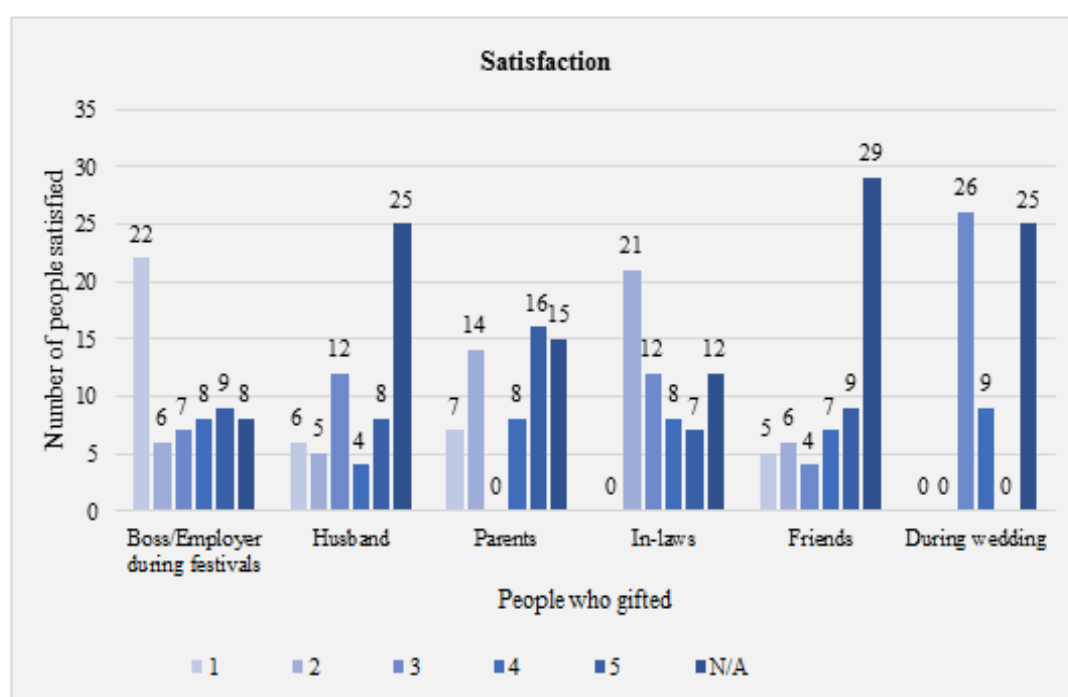
Majority of respondents never received any sari as gifts from husband, friends or during weddings. Good majority were very satisfied with sari gifts they received from employers/boss, followed by in-laws and parents. While a few were dissatisfied with sari gifts received from parents too. The feedback on passed down saris had many different perspectives, few of them preferred to pass down their own saris to family in the villages, they accepted passed down saris which were easy to maintain and if they were in good condition. “Used saris drape better on the body and become softer with every use. If it was handwoven or cotton product, added a special emotional connect.” Few of them did not wear passed down saris, but instead passed them on further.

What kind of saris do you prefer for each activity?	Simple cotton sari	Synthetic sari	Light weight shiny sari with zari embroidery	Heavy silk with zari embroidery
Daily wear at home	13	47	0	0
Dailywear at work	20	33	7	0
Festivals	8	0	32	20
Weddings	7	0	22	31
Parties/Special occasion	8	4	30	18



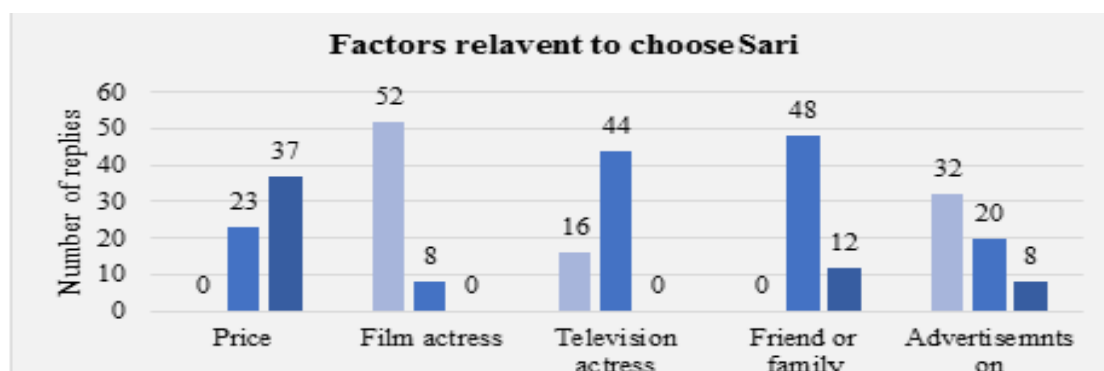
Graph 4.31 : Preferred number of sari type for each activity by lower income group women respondents.

How satisfied were you with the saris that are gifted to you. By the following people. *						
1 = Very satisfied						
5 = Very dissatisfied						
	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Boss/Employer during festivals	22	6	7	8	9	8
Husband	6	5	12	4	8	25
Parents	7	14	0	8	16	15
In-laws	0	21	12	8	7	12
Friends	5	6	4	7	9	29
During wedding	0	0	26	9	0	25



Graph 4.32 : Satisfaction level with the sari gifts received by lower income group women respondents from various people in their lives.

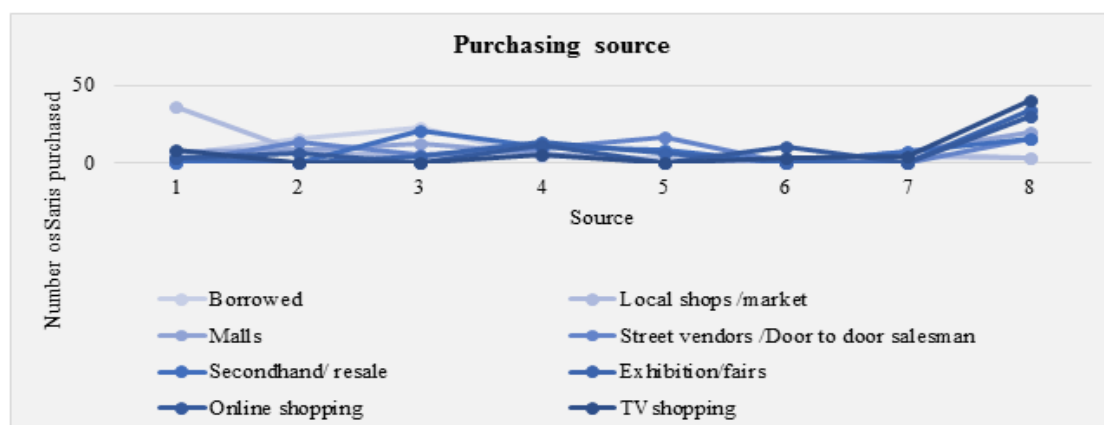
Which factors are relevant to your choice of sari?			
	Not relevant	Relevant	Very relevant
Price	0	23	37
Film actress	52	8	0
Television actress	16	44	0
Friend or family members choice	0	48	12
Advertisements on TV/newspaper	32	20	8



Graph 4.33 : Factors affecting choice of saris for lower income group women respondents.

Majority of respondents preferred to source or buy saris from local market /shops and good number of respondents have least preferred malls, street vendors/door to door salesman, secondhand/resale, exhibition/fairs, online shopping and TV shopping.

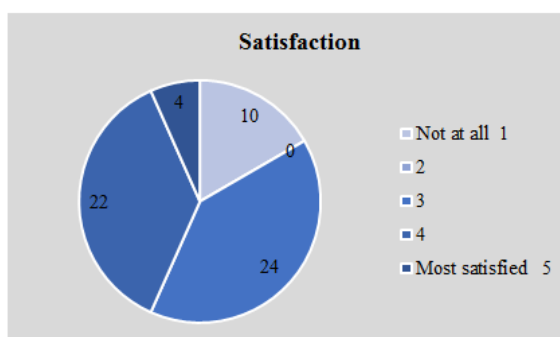
From where do you source/buy your saris? Please rank them according to your preference from 1-8? *								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Borrowed	5	16	23	4	3	0	6	3
Local shops /market	36	7	4	6	0	0	4	3
Malls	7	8	12	6	0	0	7	20
Street vendors /Door to door salesman	0	13	5	9	17	0	0	16
Second hand/ resale	0	0	21	10	8	0	7	16
Exhibition/fairs	3	0	4	13	6	0	0	34
Online shopping	3	6	0	11	0	10	0	30
TVshopping	8	0	0	5	0	3	4	40



Graph 4.34 : Sari buying behavior of lower income group women respondents.

Majority of respondents have given a neutral response to their level of satisfaction with their sari collection.

How satisfied were you with your sari collection? *		
Not at all	1	10
	2	0
	3	24
	4	22
Most satisfied	5	4

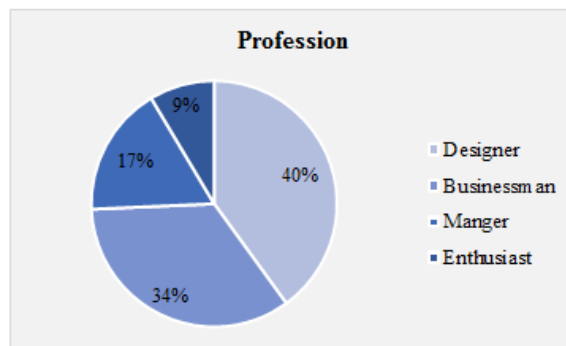


Graph 4.35 : Lower income group women respondents' satisfaction level with their sari collection.

4.3.3. Survey Results for men respondents.

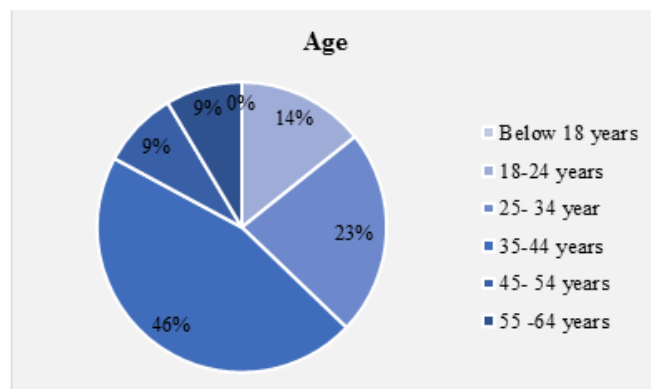
1. An online questionnaire schedule was circulated using google forms and responses from 35 men respondents were recorded online to gain an understanding about their views on the meaning of the sari.
2. The majority (40%) of men respondents were designers, followed by businessmen, managers and only (9%) few enthusiasts. None of the respondents were below 18 years of age; maximum respondents (46%) were in the age range of 35-44 years. Maximum respondents (57%) were married. None of the respondents said that women would discontinue wearing the sari, (29%) few men indicated that the women would continue wearing the sari everyday: whereas maximum men (66%) confirmed that women would wear sari only on festive occasions and weddings.

Answer Options	Response percent	Response count
Designer	40%	14
Businessman	34%	12
Manger	17%	6
Enthusiast	9%	3
	100%	35



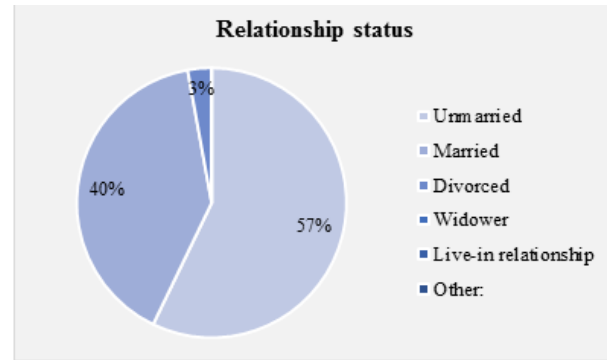
Graph 4.36 : Distribution of profession d of men respondents.

Answer Options	Response percent	Response count
Below 18 years	0%	0
18-24 years	14%	5
25- 34 year	23%	8
35-44 years	46%	16
45- 54 years	9%	3
55 -64 years	9%	3



Graph 4.37 : Age range of men respondents.

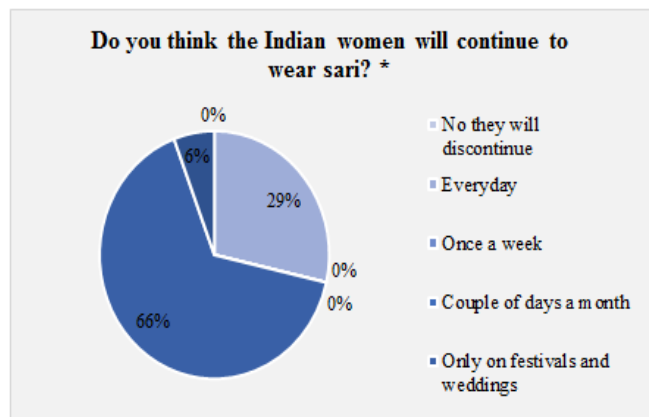
Answer Options	Response percent	Response count
Unmarried	57%	20
Married	40%	14
Divorced	3%	1
Widower	0%	0
Live-in relationship	0%	0
Other:	0%	0
	100%	35



Graph 4.38 : Marital status of men respondents.

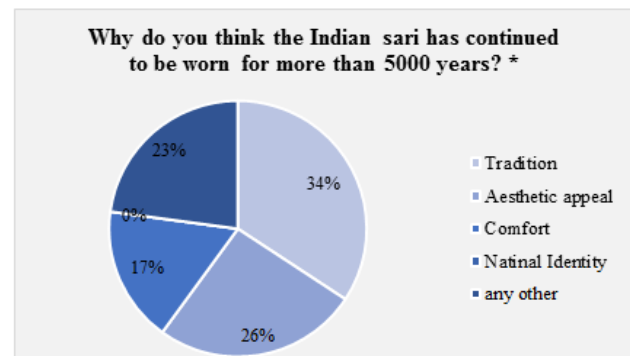
- According to the men respondents the Indian sari has continued to be worn for almost 5000 years, due to following reasons in the descending order tradition, aesthetic appeal, and comfort. The remaining few men listed open ended reasons. According to men respondents the women wore sari for due to the following reasons, majority of the women wore sari for social acceptance, followed by ornamentation and least for modesty. The men's preference of women wearing sari to work indicated that few were unsure and gave neutral response of "maybe", however maximum gave the positive response of and remaining very few responded negatively.

Answer Options	Response percent	Response count
No they will discontinue	0%	0
Everyday	29%	10
Once a week	0%	0
Couple of days a month	0%	0
Only on festivals and weddings	66%	23
Other:	6%	2



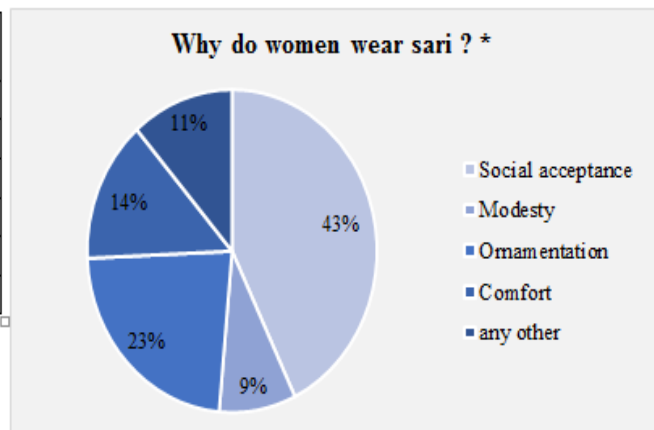
Graph 4.39 : Opinion of men regarding Indian women continuing to wearing the sari.

Answer Options	Response percent	Response count
Tradition	34%	12
Aesthetic appeal	26%	9
Comfort	17%	6
Natinal Identity	0%	0
any other	23%	8
	100%	35



Graph 4.40 : Men respondents' reasons for continuation of Indian sari being worn for almost 5000 years.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Social acceptance	43%	15
Modesty	9%	3
Ornamentation	23%	8
Comfort	14%	5
any other	11%	4
	100%	35



Graph 4.41 : Reason attributed by men respondents for women continuing wearing the sari.

- The major reason attributed by men respondents for women continuing wearing sari was (60%) "It is a very graceful draped garment, only very few stated the reasons "Very comfortable for the wearer" and "It is sensuous garment". However 14% stated "it is difficult to work in a sari". Additional feedback on whether men thought that women in saris look more appealing or powerful or graceful indicated diverse responses:

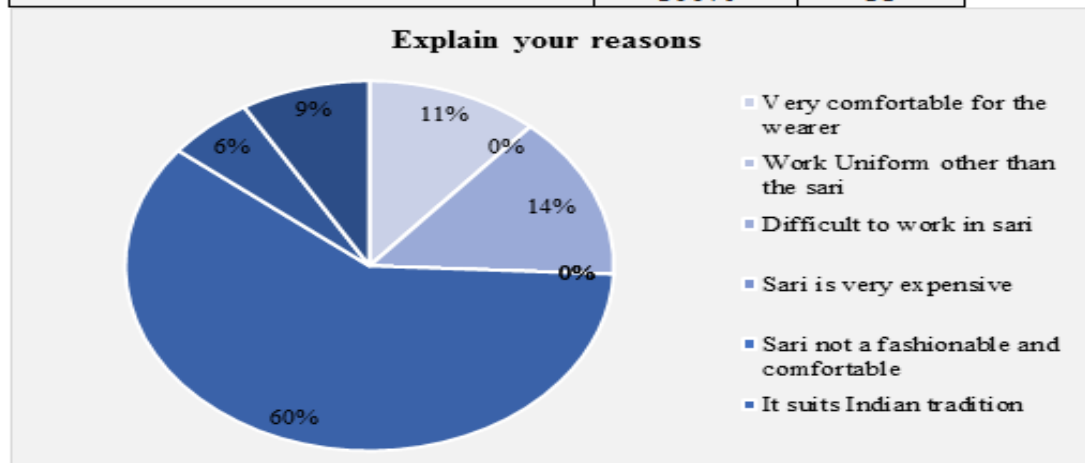
"It provides for a certain metamorphosis. The sari can change a girl to a woman, a submissive woman to a powerful force, a demur lass to a sexy siren."

"The wearing of sarees should be a matter of personal choice and style. Their appeal is governed by the wearer's persona and ability to carry them."

"Women surely looks graceful and powerful wearing a sari, it gives that aesthetic look and bring on sense of comfort and confidence in them."

“A woman draped in a sari is instantly noticeable and appreciated. Her beauty emanates further through the garment.”

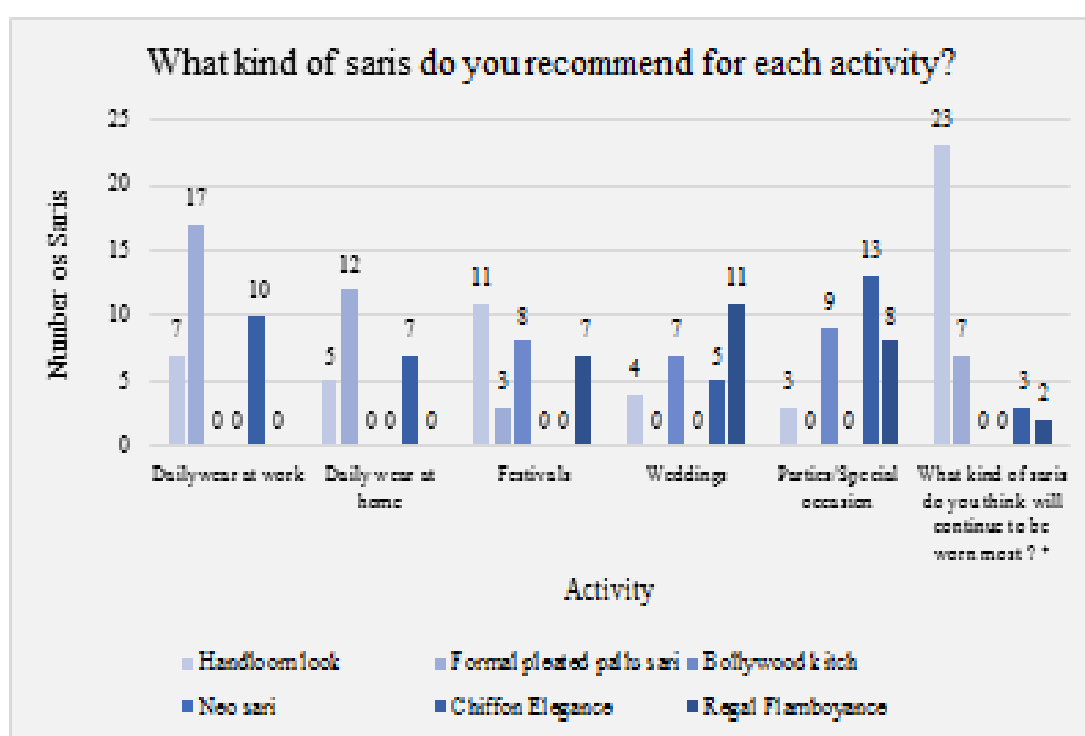
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very comfortable for the wearer	11%	4
Work Uniform other than the sari	0%	0
Difficult to work in sari	14%	5
Sari is very expensive	0%	0
Sari not a fashionable and comfortable	0%	0
It suits Indian tradition	0%	0
Its a very graceful draped garment	60%	21
Its very sensuous drape	6%	2
Other:	9%	3
	100%	35



Graph 4.42 : Explanations for reason attributed by men respondents; for women continuing wearing the sari.

- The men respondents recommendation for sari for each activity indicated that majority “Handloom look” for festivals, “Formal pleated pallu sari” for Dailywear at work, “Bollywood Kitsch” for parties, “Chiffon elegance” for parties , “Regal Flamboyance” for weddings. “Neo Look” was not recommended for any of the occasions. The men’s responses indicated that “handloom look” sari would continue to be worn the most, followed by “Formal pleated pallu sari”, “Chiffon elegance” and “Regal Flamboyance”. None of the men respondents indicated the continuation of the “Bollywood Kitsch” and “Neo Look”.

Answer options	Daily wear at work	Daily wear at home	Festivals	Weddings	Parties/Special occasion	What kind of saris do you think will continue to be worn most?
Handloom look	7	5	11	4	3	23
Formal pleated pallu sari	17	12	3	0	0	7
Bollywood kitsch	0	0	8	7	9	0
Neo sari	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chiffon Elegance	10	7	0	5	13	3
Regal Flamboyance	0	0	7	11	8	2

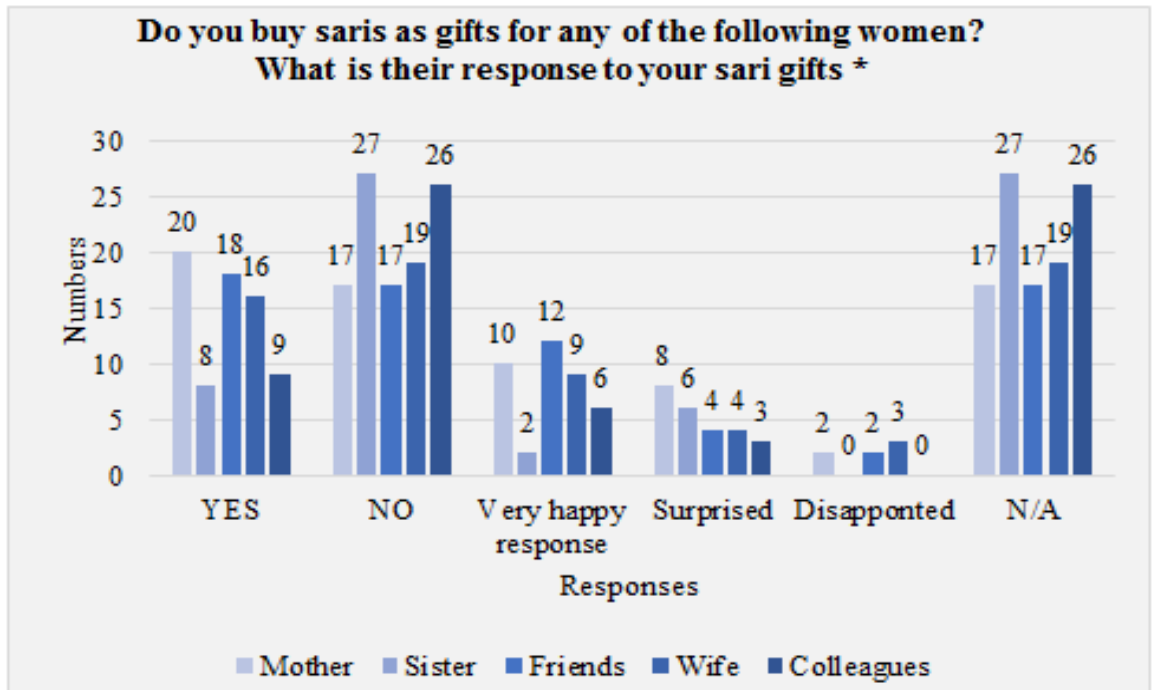


Graph 4.43 : Sari recommendations by men for each activity.

- Majority of men respondents bought saris as gifts for mothers and majority of them did not prefer buying saris as gifts for colleagues. A good number of

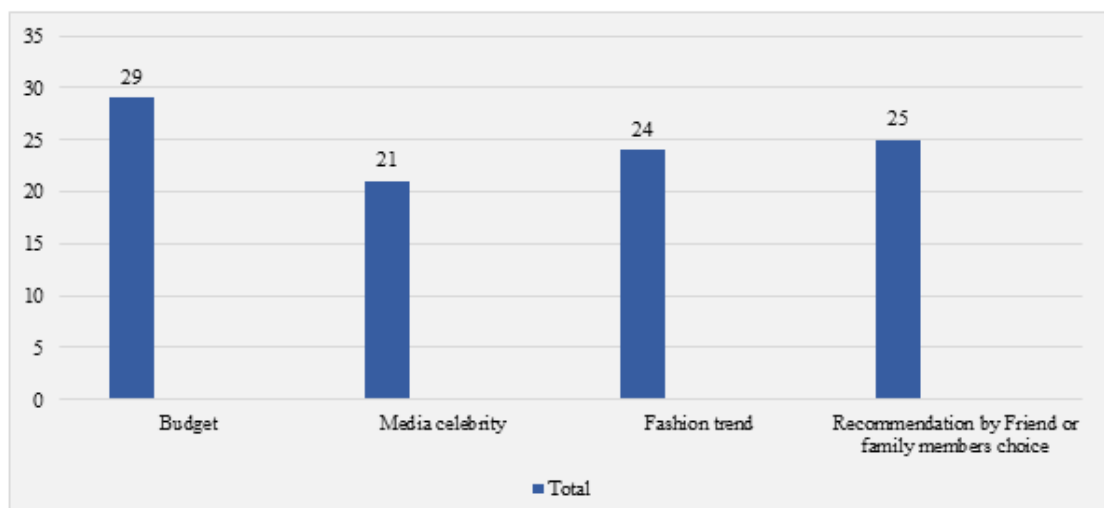
respondents bought saris for wives and friends but were afraid of disappointing the recipients.

Do you buy saris as gifts for any of the following women? What is their response to your sari gifts *	YES	NO	Very happy response	Surprised	Disappointed	N/A
Mother	20	17	10	8	2	17
Sister	8	27	2	6	0	27
Friends	18	17	12	4	2	17
Wife	16	19	9	4	3	19
Colleagues	9	26	6	3	0	26



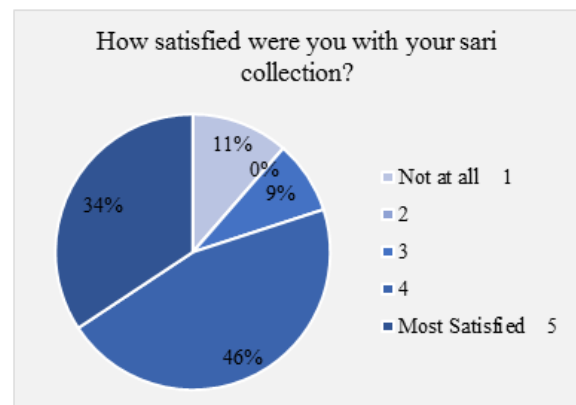
Graph 4. 44 : Sari buying and gifting habits of men and response they received from women who were recipients of the gift.

What factors influence your choice of sari? Please rank them according to the level of influence from 1-4 ? *	1	2	3	4	Total	Average Ranking
Budget	10	14	5	6	29	1
Media celebrity	7	8	6	14	21	4
Fashion trend	6	10	8	11	24	3
Recommendation by Friend or family members choice	12	8	5	10	25	2



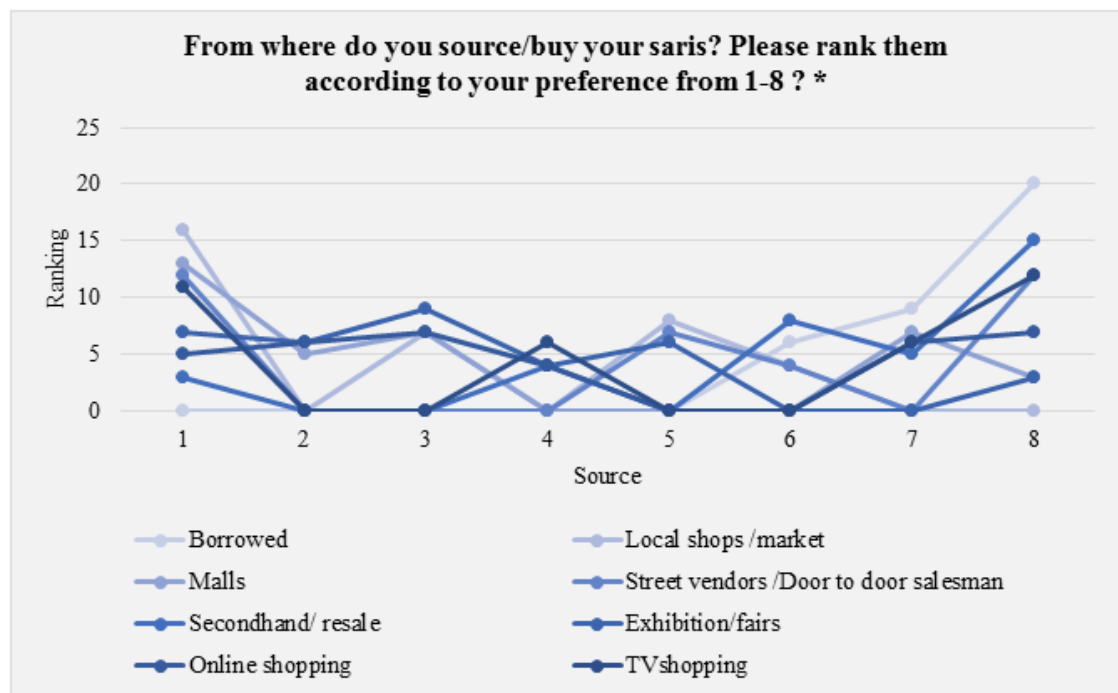
Graph 4. 45 : Factors influencing men's choice of sari.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Not at all 1	11%	4
2	0%	0
3	9%	3
4	46%	16
Most Satisfied 5	34%	12



Graph 4. 46 : Satisfaction level of men with the sari collection of women in their life.

From where do you source/buy your saris? Please rank them according to your preference from 1-8? *	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Borrowed	0	0	0	0	0	6	9	20
Local shops /market	16	0	7	0	8	4	0	0
Malls	13	5	7	0	0	0	7	3
Street vendors /Door to door salesman	12	0	0	0	7	4	0	12
Second hand/ resale	3	0	0	4	0	8	5	15
Exhibition/fairs	7	6	9	4	6	0	0	3
Online shopping	5	6	7	4	0	0	6	7
T.V. Shopping	11	0	0	6	0	0	6	12



Graph 4. 47 : Distribution of sari buying behavior / sourcing of men respondents.

- The results for men respondents indicate that the most preferred sources for buying saris are local shops/markets and malls, and the least preferred are borrowed, second-hand and resale. However the preferred sources ranking from 1-8 was spread evenly for the Street vendors /Door to door salesman, exhibition/fairs, Online shopping and TV shopping. Majority of the respondents were satisfied with the sari collection of women in their life,

spouse/partners , mother etcetera.. It could also be the major reason attributed to the fact that most of them agreed to answer the survey pertaining to drape which is often perceived to be feminine garment.

4.3.4. Comparisons of findings from all the phase II survey data from all 3 groups

1. The comparison of results from the three groups of respondents indicated that majority of men (46%) and middle and upper income group women (32%) were in the age group of 35-44 years, and majority of lower income group women (43%) were in the age range of 25-34year of age, which was almost 10 years younger than the other two groups. The results indicated that majority of the respondents in all the three groups were married.
2. Appraisals regarding the view on the practice of wearing the sari (29%) few men respondents said that sari will continue to be everyday wear and majority of men (66%) said it will worn for festive occasions and weddings; (49%) there was almost positive response towards women wearing sari to work by the men.
3. The responses of women in upper and higher income group; indicated that majority (88%) wore the sari. Regarding the practice of wearing the sari in future and the number of sari wearers reducing (53.1%) and number of sari wearers not reducing (46.9%) was found to be very close. Majority (72.7%) of respondents said it would continue to be an integral part of the wardrobe. Majority (74.2%) also said the sari would continue to be a part of the Indian women's bridal trousseau.
4. The majority (60%) of lower income group women wore sari daily. Majority of respondents from this group preferred wearing sari to work (72%) and the major reason they stated was that they found it to be comfortable. The responses regarding the "discomfort while working wearing a sari" were also substantial in all the three groups, but at the same time there was agreement on the major reasons attributed for women continuing to wear sari. "It is a very graceful draped garment, "Very comfortable for the wearer" and "It is sensuous garment". This quantitative data supported the qualitative

observations by the expert panelist and case studies that the Indian sari would continue to be worn across socio- economic group, for everyday wear as well as special occasions. The details and variations would be varied and unique to each woman. It was difficult to rely solely on the quantitative data in this study as cross referencing of data showed contradictory results when it comes to sari preference for each individual sari wearer.

5. The comparison of results from the three groups of respondents regarding their sari buying (sourcing) practices indicated that majority of men and women from middle and upper income group preferred the local shops and markets, malls and chain-stores. The data indicated that there were multiple type of preferences for each option of sourcing saris and there was no direct co relation between women from middle and upper income group and women from lower income group responses. There it was observed that the lower income group preferred shopping in the local shops and markets too and a good majority indicated that they did not buy from exhibitions, malls, online or TV shopping mode was not very popular till the time of the studying the lower income groups. It is also noteworthy that the growing popularity and convenience of online shopping has led to co-existence of both “Brick and Click” mode of buying saris amongst the middle and upper classes. The qualitative data often has been helpful in verifying the soundness and cross referencing of quantitative data for gaining deeper insights on buying behavior.
6. With reference to emerging trends in saris the vocabulary, the type and level of engagement with sari were varying for all the respondent groups hence quantitative comparison was thought-provoking and photographic references were provided to maintain objectivity. Each group had indicated their preference for the type of sari look for various activities and combined preference is shown in **Model 3: Trend prediction for type of sari for various looks, on pg. no. 188.**
7. Assessment of results for the future of the sari by all three groups, expert panelist and the case study data indicated that sari would continue be an integral part of the Indian women’s wardrobe. The interpretations could be many; traditional and fusion style, pre- pleated and partywear looks, the

panelist however were not in favor of the cut and sew sari. There was neutral response to the “Neo-Sari” by the experts and women however the men gave no preference to the neo sari look. Thus the semiotic interpretations of the sari for future trend predictions are likely to be complex yet at the same time exploratory with the changing concepts of self-image for women and the lifestyle factors.

The comparison of results from the three groups of respondents regarding the view on purpose of wearing the sari indicated that majority of men (43%) and Lower income group women (53%) gave first preference to “social acceptance”, whereas only (14.1%) few women from Middle income group gave that preference, majority (57%) of these educated women indicated the reason as “ornamentation”. All three groups gave the least preference to “Modesty” as the purpose of wearing the sari. There was similarity in the order of preference between the Men and Middle and higher income group women regarding reasons why the Indian sari has continued to be worn for almost 5000 years major reasons stated were “tradition”, “aesthetic appeal” and “comfort”, however the preference for “national identity” and “other reasons” were not in same order. There was specific quantitative data on the difficulties faced while wearing a sari, but at the same time substantial data was available to enumerate the advantages of wearing the sari. Thus there were opportunities for the Indian Fashion system to overcome the challenges faced for wearing the sari. (Refer Graph 4.16 on page no.109 & Refer Graph 4.19 and on page no.112)

4.4 Phase II) Decoding Photographic references and case studies

The distinction of the Indian fashion system embedded in popular culture through visual media like, family albums, films, magazine articles, red carpets appearance etcetera, was carefully analyzed. The data collected through visual and literary references on the costume traditions was discussed in detail for decoding non-verbal meaning making and specific communication.

Photographs of sari clad women representing various socio-economic backgrounds, occasions, industry sector and age groups etcetera, were collected from primary sources. Friends, families and respondents were requested to share their family

pictures with short descriptions about the wearer, occasion and sari descriptions as per their understanding. A few secondary photographs were taken from magazines and the prominent internet sources like Google images, Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook, film screens shots, advertisements.

Considering the above parameters pictures were selected using purposive random sampling method and grouped them in 23 plates. Each plate was further decoded for semiotic interpretation and analysis. The sari photos in each plate signifies unique semiotic codes for the regional drapes, profession, age, social role, profession, commercial interpretation, media & advertisement, Bollywood films , media influences, men, celebrities, fashion system, stylists and bloggers, sari shopping experience, wedding ceremonies, inter caste marriages, *pujas* and festivals, dress code and uniforms, manual labor class, urban middle class and urban home makers. Visual methodologies and tools were developed specially for this study incorporating the Denotation and Connotation model to contrast the symbolism of how the sari has changed as a consequence of changing dress habits and emerging trends.



Plate 4.2 : Age groups

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1592618504310398/search/?query=smita>

Across age groups the modern style of sari draping, 6 yard sari with tailored matching blouse was preferred. The women in the picture preferred draping their sari pallu in free falling single layer, pinned on the left shoulder. Some were standing or sitting comfortably at home or outside the home, at ease with their sari. The image of the young girl in the rust colored sari was a good example of initiation to the sari for a school activity; role playing a more grown up look like the teacher or mother.



Plate 4.3 : Indian Textile Heritage

<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10153577999467117&set=gm.1753338841571696&type=3&theater>

Ms. Laila Tyabji is a renowned Indian textile curator and revivalist. She has diligently taken daily picture of herself draped in her unique collections of exquisite cotton saris and written explicitly about each sari story and posted on social Media. On the right side she was taking picture of herself in exquisite silk saris; with the close up of distinguishing features of her collection of handpicked saris. Her endeavor was to promote authentic handcrafted Indian textiles and educated the masses and she is a noted sari connoisseur.



Plate 4.4 : Immersive semiotic communication

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1592618504310398/search/?query=vaibbhavi>

The researcher of this study herself (Ms. Vaibbhavi P) was in the pursuit of engaging with respondents and their take on the sari, therefore joined the closed group of sari lovers on Facebook # Do100Saripact. The idea was to document the use of sari in daily wear, a regular sari wearer and often shared sari stories with friends and acquaintances when the opportunity presented itself. However joining the pact helped her to share stories with a larger community and spread the awareness about the various Indian textiles, versatile ways of draping, styling for numerous occasions and the messages she conveyed in a tacit manner:

1. Magenta *Maheshwari* silk sari with *Ikkat* blouse for Formal Orientation Program for the new cohort of students,
2. Mint green *Chanderi* cotton sari with hand block printed blouse for semester end Juries.
3. Beige embroidered georgette with grey crop top and wig for Bollywood theme office party,

4. Black hand-embroidered and lace georgette sari with a matching blouse for a niece's *Sangeet Sandhya* (pre wedding event with song and dance).
5. Off white Jamdani cotton with back and gold border and pallu for formal conference.
6. Mustard Maheshwari cotton with handblock printed sleeveless blouse for appraisal meetings.
7. Apple green silk with Kalamkari blouse for the Handloom day at the Lakme Fashion week.
8. Teal blue Maheshwari silk with south cotton Navy blue blouse for home puja.



Plate 4.5 : Sari wearing for first time and commercial interpretation

https://www.google.co.in/search?q=prestitched+kids+sari&tbn=isch&imgil=g1CgiDEqv1ysrM%253A%253BWIIBXPLAA5yrUM%253Bhttps%25253A%25252F%25252Fwww.pinterest.com%25252Fpin%25252F493777546622788440%25252F&source=iu&pf=m&fir=g1CgiDEqv1ysrM%253A%252CWIIBXPLAA5yrUM%252C_&usg=_cM5L8YxtHbwGrJMNFLuMhgojKxA%3D&biw=1517&bih=681&ved=0ahUKEwjW4JrS3TAhWJQ48KHRwdCVoQyjcIOw&ei=hJvtWNaOL4mHvQScuqTQBQ#imgre=g1CgiDEqv1ysr

The association of the sari and Indian women begins at an early stage of doll play and dressing up the dolls, role play of an older lady they like eg, mother, teacher etc. Teachers day in school, of some performance on stage.

Commercial gratification in the form of sari clad Barbie dolls or other dolls. Pre-stitched saris were available readily for young girls for festivals and weddings or dance performances.

Also as rite of passage the preferred dress for school/college farewells or convocations was often the sari, which was most likely the first sari a girl gets for her, or was borrowed from mother's wardrobe. Then it continues as a Sari day in college and photo opportunity in Indian clothes. This continues as one grows up, the sari worn for a friend's or family member's wedding, or often own wedding, or at work or formal evenings.



Plate 4.6 : Media and advertisements

https://images.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?p=goggle+images+surf+detergent+india+ads&fr=yhs-adk-adk_sbnt&hspart=adk&hsimp=yhs-adk_sbnt&imgurl=https%3A%2F%2Fs-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com%2F736x%2F8a%2Fe5%2F6a%2F8ae56a8ebe190b0e9bf77660760ab4d2.jpg#id=0&iurl=https%3A%2F%2Fs-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com%2F736x%2F8a%2Fe5%2F6a%2F8ae56a8ebe190b0e9bf77660760ab4d2.jpg&action=click

The depiction of women as homemakers has been very well stereotyped in detergent advertisements. Till the 1900's majority of Indian Homemakers were sari clad (for daily chores) and stayed at home and eventually the homemakers moved to other ways of dressing in form of *salwaar-kameez dupatta*, trousers and *kurti* (Tunic); trousers and shirt also as women started working out of the house along with housework. The last commercial advertisement depicts empathetic father who realizes that men need to share the load with the homemakers. Though the example was not

directly related to the sari, it was reflection of the changing role and status of women in society and gender equations.

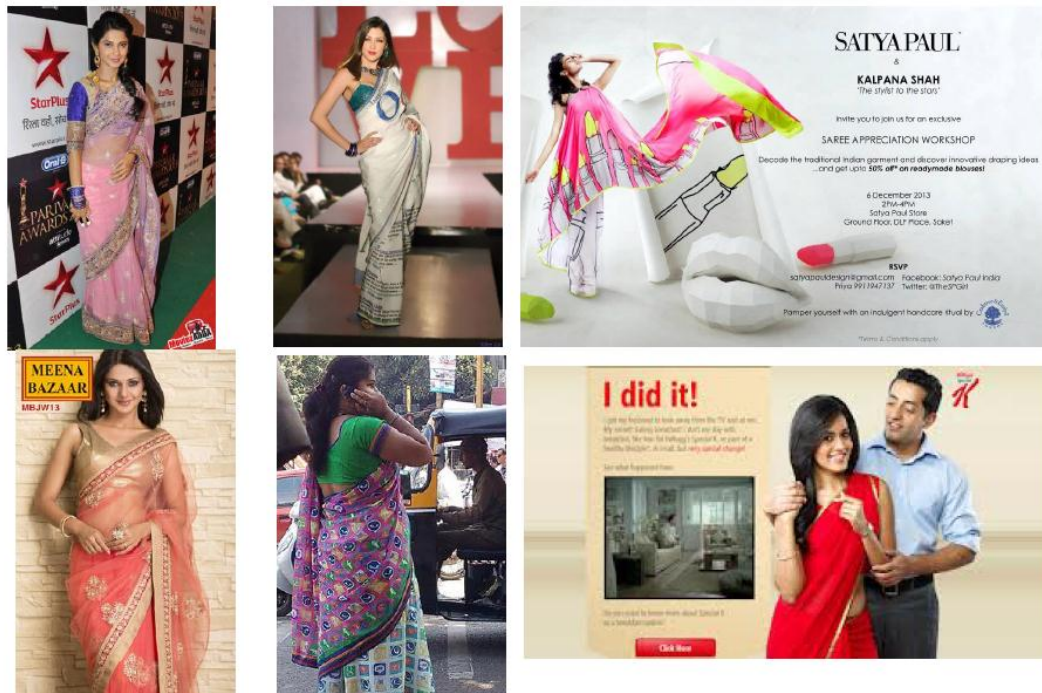


Plate 4.7 : Influencers in Media

[https://images.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search;_ylt=AwrB8qAX1eRYUilAJHk2lI1Q;_ylu=X3oDMTBsZ29xY3ZzBHNIYwNzZWYyY2gEc2xrA2JldHRvbG--;_ylc=X1MDMTM1MTE5NTcwMgRfcgMyBGFjdG4DY2xrBGJjawNlbWZ1bWpkYzdoM2J0JT12YiUzRDMIMjZzJTNEOHIEY3NyY3B2aWQDRUF0WkpEWTVMakhYUDIIYldlaU5mUTRaTVRJeUxnQUFBQUwmaWJCUgRmcgN5aHMiYWWRrLWFka19zYm50BGZyMgNzYS1ncARncHJpZANCRCXpkaEZiQUJ3VzZPRHM1clBSU3dBBG10ZXN0aWQDbnVsbARuX3N1Z2cDMQRvcmlnaW4DaW1hZ2V2LnNIYXJjaC55YWhvby5jb20EcG9zAzAEcHFzdHIDBHBxc3RybAMEcXN0cmwDMTcEcXVlcnkDa2VsbG9ncyBpbmRpYSBhZHMEdF9zdG1wAzE0OTEzOTE3ODAEbnRlc3RpdANudWxs?gpid=BEzdhFmBRWw6ODs5rPRSwA&pvid=EAtZJDY5LjHrP9ebWHINfQ4ZMTiYlgAAAAC0jRBR&p=kellogs+india+ads&fr=yhs-adk_sbn&fr2=sb-top-images.search.yahoo.com&ei=UTF-8&n=60&x=wrt&hsmip=yhs-adk_sbn&chspart=adk#id=1&iurl=http%3A%2F%2F2.bp.blogspot.com%2F-CNiJ6bvyyH4%2FU1eKQetvt3I%2FAAAAAAAAAAAx%2FSjbzqbrEosQ%2Fs1600%2F1962700_622038507870256_1917012878_n\(1\).jpg&action=click](https://images.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search;_ylt=AwrB8qAX1eRYUilAJHk2lI1Q;_ylu=X3oDMTBsZ29xY3ZzBHNIYwNzZWYyY2gEc2xrA2JldHRvbG--;_ylc=X1MDMTM1MTE5NTcwMgRfcgMyBGFjdG4DY2xrBGJjawNlbWZ1bWpkYzdoM2J0JT12YiUzRDMIMjZzJTNEOHIEY3NyY3B2aWQDRUF0WkpEWTVMakhYUDIIYldlaU5mUTRaTVRJeUxnQUFBQUwmaWJCUgRmcgN5aHMiYWWRrLWFka19zYm50BGZyMgNzYS1ncARncHJpZANCRCXpkaEZiQUJ3VzZPRHM1clBSU3dBBG10ZXN0aWQDbnVsbARuX3N1Z2cDMQRvcmlnaW4DaW1hZ2V2LnNIYXJjaC55YWhvby5jb20EcG9zAzAEcHFzdHIDBHBxc3RybAMEcXN0cmwDMTcEcXVlcnkDa2VsbG9ncyBpbmRpYSBhZHMEdF9zdG1wAzE0OTEzOTE3ODAEbnRlc3RpdANudWxs?gpid=BEzdhFmBRWw6ODs5rPRSwA&pvid=EAtZJDY5LjHrP9ebWHINfQ4ZMTiYlgAAAAC0jRBR&p=kellogs+india+ads&fr=yhs-adk_sbn&fr2=sb-top-images.search.yahoo.com&ei=UTF-8&n=60&x=wrt&hsmip=yhs-adk_sbn&chspart=adk#id=1&iurl=http%3A%2F%2F2.bp.blogspot.com%2F-CNiJ6bvyyH4%2FU1eKQetvt3I%2FAAAAAAAAAAAx%2FSjbzqbrEosQ%2Fs1600%2F1962700_622038507870256_1917012878_n(1).jpg&action=click)

Despite the acceptance of new ways of dressing , globalization and information technology changing almost everything right from how clothing was manufactured, sold and consumed; the sari has withstood the changes and adapted to the new world.

Satellite television changed our daily lifestyle and the soap opera characters became very influential, their onscreen dressing became huge influence for sari fashion, they endorsed brands selling online as well as in local markets pan India.

Social Media was a great influencer for high end designer saris like Satya Paul which had a Google graphic inspired sari presented on the fashion ramp and also mass

manufactured sari with Social media icons inspired print worn by a common woman on the street.

Multinational brands made significant impact on Indian lifestyle; however the advertisement adapted to suggest that Indian women could flaunt their curves in a sari (instead of a western dress) after using their product, Eg. Kellogs corn flakes.

Since women were not accustomed to wearing the sari regularly, many women were not able to drape it comfortably by themselves. Hence special sari draping experts were in demand either for conducting workshops/demonstration or for customized draping for clients before the occasion.



Love Saree (l to r): Laila Tyabji, Geeta Chandran, Rajeev Tandon, David Abraham, Tritha Sinha, Himanshu Verma, Rita Soni

Plate 4.8 : Man in Sari

[The sari was often considered a women's draped garment, however Himanshu Verma, prides himself as the sari man, has undertaken many sari sustenance events and given the slogan "Jai Sari". A lot of designers irrespective of their gender were working on finding a new meaning of the sari for the contemporary women.](https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1366&bih=662&q=saree+utsav&oq=saree+utsav&gs_l=img..3..012j0i5i30k1j0i8i30k115j0i24k112.5499.9147.0.10624.12.12.0.0.0.0.201.1469.0j10j1.11.0....0...1.1.64.img..1.11.1468.0..35i39k1.vLb7Te9n8Ys#tbm=isch&q=himanshu+verma+saree+man&*>https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1366&bih=662&q=saree+utsav&oq=saree+utsav&gs_l=img..3..012j0i5i30k1j0i8i30k115j0i24k112.5499.9147.0.10624.12.12.0.0.0.0.201.1469.0j10j1.11.0....0...1.1.64.img..1.11.1468.0..35i39k1.vLb7Te9n8Ys#tbm=isch&q=himanshu+verma+saree+man&*></p></div><div data-bbox=)



Plate 4.9 : Bollywood - Hindi cinema interpretation and influence

[Bollywood is one of the biggest fashion influencers in Indian fashion system. Despite the many success stories for women in every walk of life, a good number of Bollywood films ended up sexually objectifying women in the on screen portrayal. They were dressed scantily and the sari allowed to show as much as hide. The saris used for these item songs were often made of sheer fabrics, pre-stitched to avoid excess bulk fabric and also coming undone during vigorous dance moves. The sari was also a preferred red carpet dress for many Bollywood actors for its grace and splendor both.](https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1366&bih=662&q=saree+utsav&oq=saree+utsav&gs_l=img_3..012j0i5i30k1j0i8i30k115j0i24k112.5499.9147.0.10624.12.12.0.0.0.201.1469.0j10j1.11.0....0...1.1.64.img..1.11.1468.0..35i39k1.vLb7Te9n8Ys#tbm=isch&q=bollywood+actress+saree+images+desi+girl&*></p>
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By the turn of the century and the influence of the Musical divas, music and dance videos in the west; the concept of item numbers came to Bollywood, the heroine doubled up as the ultimate seductress, and often did cameo's in films which she was not the lead. These "item numbers" led to live performances and a source of additional revenue and endorsements too. The leading ladies of Bollywood were often the cover girls for fashion magazines and showstoppers for fashion runways and brand ambassadors of leading fashion brands. The debate about commodification of these emancipated girls was endless.



Plate 4.10 : Mother figures in Hindi cinema

[In a typical Bollywood film the mother played a pivotal role, the onscreen depiction has undergone many changes with time and role of women in society. Many yesteryears leading ladies were portraying the mother's role on screen and have adapted the sari with immense grace and continue their sari love.](https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbn=isch&source=hp&biw=1366&bih=662&q=saree+utsav&oq=saree+utsav&gs_l=img_3..012j0i5i30k1j0i8i30k115j0i24k112.5499.9147.0.10624.12.12.0.0.0.0.201.1469.0j10j1.1.1.0....0...1.1.64.img..1.11.1468.0..35i39k1.vLb7Te9n8Ys#tbn=isch&q=bollywood+actress+saree+image+mother&*></p>
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One more very significant interpretation of the Indian Fashion System was via popular culture in terms of Mumbai Film Industry popularly known as **Bollywood** and the satellite television post the 90's when the movies came to every living room, before the cable TV one had to go to the cinema theater's to get the latest fashion updates or read filmy magazines. Bollywood entertainers would be incomplete without the female protagonist - heroine (represented beauty, grace, romance), the mother (Drama and sacrifice), the vamp (Demanding Matriarch/ Scheming Seductress); and off course the glamour of dance and music was the responsibility of the screen goddesses.

The young actress till the 80's could wear whatever she pleased in terms of fashion trends during the romantic outings, however when meeting the elders in the family , she had to present herself as *a sushilkanya*; the most eligible bride to be.

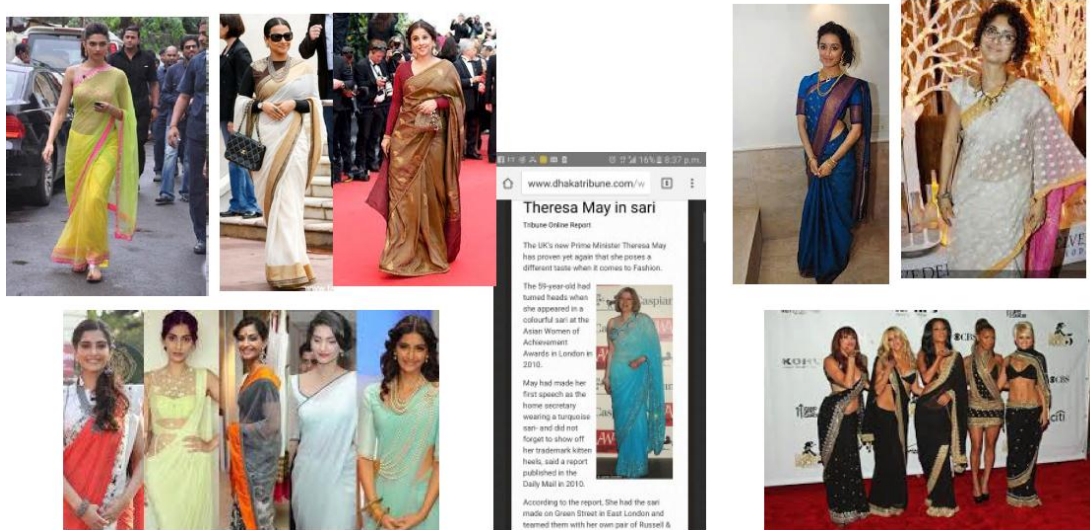


Plate 4.11: Celebrity influencers

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Indian celebrities who were filmmakers, star wives etcetera also wore the sari at special occasions. Many Indian celebrities were recognized as fashion icons were brand ambassadors of multi-national fashion brands. They have preferred sari as their dress for international red carpets, for its grace and standing out in the crowd of evening gowns worn by other celebrities and have received very good reviews from the fashion press.

Many international celebrities like U.K. Prime minister Ms. Theresa May draped in a turquoise sari for awards ceremony of Asian women of achievement in London 2016. Pussycat Dolls have also worn the sari.



Plate 4.12: Indian Fashion system presentation formats

[The Indian fashion System had wide variety of ensembles; however the sari held a revered position and noted designers like Sabyasachi Mukherjee, Gaurang Shah, Abraham and Thakore, Anavila Sindhu Mishra etcetera have given it their own interpretation to make it more relevant to the changing times. Even local beauty pageants included various sari drapes to bring out the exotic grace.](https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1366&bih=662&q=saree+utsav&oq=saree+utsav&gs_l=img_3..012j0i5i30k1j0i8i30k115j0i24k112.5499.9147.0.10624.12.12.0.0.0.0.201.1469.0j10j1.11.0....0...1.1.64.img..1.11.1468.0..35i39k1.vLb7Te9n8Ys#tbm=isch&q=saree++sabyasachi+runway++in+india&*>https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1366&bih=662&q=saree+utsav&oq=saree+utsav&gs_l=img_3..012j0i5i30k1j0i8i30k115j0i24k112.5499.9147.0.10624.12.12.0.0.0.0.201.1469.0j10j1.11.0....0...1.1.64.img..1.11.1468.0..35i39k1.vLb7Te9n8Ys#tbm=isch&q=saree++sabyasachi+runway++in+india&*</p></div><div data-bbox=)



Plate 4.13: Neo-sari interpretations

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The contemporary interpretation of the belted sari, sari paired with trousers, shorts, jackets, pre stitched - gown like , incorporating new age materials and finishing techniques had given a new lease of life to the historic draped garment, the sari.

International luxury brands like Hermes' known for its silk scarves have also launched sari collections for premium connoisseurs.



Plate 4.14 : Bloggers and stylists as influencers

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Social media saw a new trend of many stylists/ bloggers posting interesting interpretation of the sari styled for the post-modern women; made heads turn and yet gave that edgy or quirky look. Also the classic traditional sari, incorporating vintage styling and heirloom pieces continued trending. This eclectic mix would be helpful in defining the neo sari after the phase of flux passed by.

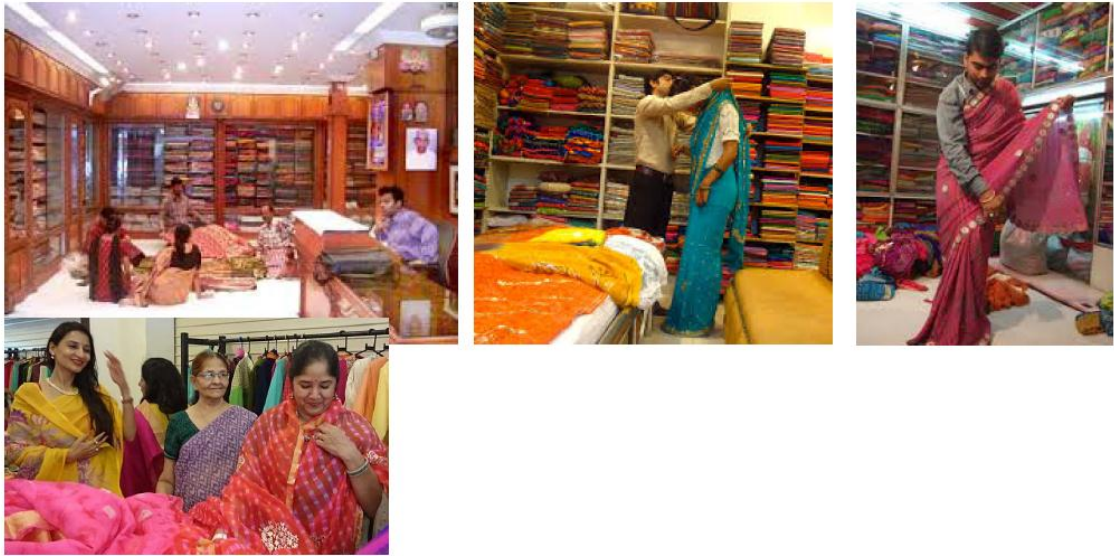


Plate 4.15 : Sari Shopping

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The Sari shopping experience was very unique, traditionally it was low seating on mattresses covered in white sheets. The salesman would keep spreading multiple saris till the ladies were flattered. The relationship with the customers and the convincing skills - glib of the salesman were unmatched. They often helped the customer to drape the sari on the spot. Or draped it on own selves which help one visualize better and take a decision; much before the concept of a trial room came into practice in Indian ready to wear segment.

Another interesting observation was that sari shopping was seldom a solitary experience; one would have the most trusted friend, partner along. If it was a group of women then it was more entertaining, usually the case for festive or wedding shopping.

With the onset of online shopping a lot of women were considering that option, where you could see the draped sari in all angles before taking the final call. And you could get finished sari with the fall attached, edges picoted, polishing for heavy saris, customized blouse (if that service was available) etcetera. Thus a ready to wear sari delivered at the doorstep, off course at a premium and was very convenient for the busy lifestyle.



Plate 4.16 : Wedding ceremonies

Marriages in India were really a huge celebration not only for the bride, but for the extended family and the community at large; where everyone turned out in the best that they can afford. Indian marriage ceremonies went on for couple of days and there were many pre and post wedding occasions which also constituted the bridal trousseau and requirements for the family and wedding guests. The color code for *Haldi* ceremony was yellow, where the bride was blessed and *haldi* (Turmeric and other auspicious herbs) were applied to the bride, which serves as a natural antiseptic and adds warm glow to the bride in anticipation of the wedding.

All the brides wore the traditional costumes for the wedding ceremony. The degree of ornamentation had increased over a period of time.

The overall presentation of the fashion look seems to represent the exhibitionism of the economic boom synonymous to the Big Fat Indian wedding, which was much simpler in closed economy of the 80's.

Over a period of time the transition from the real garment to the represented garment was evident. One could observe that as the brides were getting emancipated even as they adorned a represented garment, they were confident about showing their real personas during the wedding ceremonies, in contrast to socially acceptable shy representation of the bride of the 80's.

The brides of the new millennium often were unfamiliar to the fit and feel of the traditional costumes and adorned their designer bridal dresses only once or very rarely repeated it later in life. They were not used to carrying the heavy costume, drapes and jewelry. As they had worn casualwear or work formal fashions till that day. The neue brides seek specialist professional help for draping, makeup and poise. In earlier time the brides married at a younger age and were groomed to wear a sari and carry themselves well at home and were dressed up by friends and cousins retaining the family traditions. The bridal wear was heirloom and worn often on important occasion post the wedding too. In both cases the elder women gave the approving nod as an endorsement at least on the wedding day! It may therefore be accepted that the wedding dress has become a costume with the expansion of the Indian fashion system over the decades. The wedding dress simulated the strongest construct of the hyper reality that the neue Indian women seek. The wedding look was complete with coordinated accessories; owned or borrowed.



Plate 4.17 : Inter-caste marriages

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1592618504310398/search/?query=weddings>

The inter-caste marriages were on rise and one could see a good mix of customs from both the communities and the influence of changing lifestyles, grooming practices in the bridal fashions. The *seedha palla* (*pallu brought in front over the right shoulder*) sari drape was reserved for the weddings to show the elaborate details of the *pallu*. Or

the double *pallu* style to cover the head for the ceremonies. The regional drapes were also worn during weddings.

The warm hues of the Indian color palette were tweaked as per fashion trends by the fashion forward, while many still prefer the traditional colors and textiles. It was interesting to note color preferences changing over time.

Mrs. Agrawal wore a pastel color sari for her own wedding, whereas preferred to wear a bright yellow with traditional “*Bandhej odhna*” on the occasion of her own son’s wedding.

The inter-caste marriages showed the evidence of incorporating costume traditions of both communities and separate ceremonies or beautifully combined in the same ceremony. The NRI wedding was also great opportunity to present ones ethnic identity through “represented garment” of the NRI Bridal trousseau and celebrations and often more about exhibiting to the extended Indian family, their socio-economic status and lifestyle and simulating a make-believe hyper reality.

The bridesmaids also appeared more prepared and well turned out compared to earlier times; this was in a way preparation for their own big day in future and probably seeks a suitor or a photo opportunity or for being introduced to their boyfriend’s family before the formal announcement.

The bridesmaids and the brides for other pre and post wedding functions (occasions) besides the actual wedding: over the years seemed more experimental and adopted the fusion space of Indo western fashion or at least adopted a more generic Indian ethnic fashion trend like an *Anarkali* Suit, Pre stitched sari gowns, *salwar kameez* ; androgynous take on the *sherwani* jacket teamed with straight pants or *dhoti* pants, *Jodhpur* breeches; sexy *choli* and *lehenga* /designer saris. Thus the hypothesis that the wedding dress has a positive relationship with the attitude of the Indian society towards fashion is proven.



Plate 4.18 : Pooja and Pilgrimage or yatra

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1592618504310398/search/?query=puja>

Wearing a new sari (draped garments, stitching is considered to be impure) for religious ceremonies or offering puja at temples or during festivals at home, it was considered auspicious. *Karva chauth* was a huge festival in North India, where the married ladies were dressed in their bridal dress or sari and offer prayers for the long life of their husbands. The color-code for this *puja* was red; however other warm /bright colors are also worn these days.

People also went on holy pilgrimages to various shrines eg. “*Pandharpur Waari*” in Maharashtra, India, often the rural pilgrims walked long distances and saris were draped in their traditional style. However with the growing mass production, affordability and ease in maintenance they have moved from the local handloom weaves to mill made, synthetic, printed versions in bright colors. The draping style popular amongst the younger women was the *Nivi* style.



Plate 4.19 : Festivals

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1592618504310398/search/?query=festival>

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The major Indian festivals like *Holi*, *Ganesh Utsav*, *Navratri /Durga Pujo*, *Diwali* etcetera were occasions for family reunions and celebrations, so the best saris were worn even by women who have discontinued wearing saris on a daily basis. The festive saris were dressier and elaborate compared to dailywear or workwear sari. The festive saris helped them to be rooted to tradition and customs, regional drapes and jewelry were worn. Women bought and gifted saris during these festivals and wedding season.

Indian Fashion calendar was planned to cater to consumer demands during regional festivals starting from August to December across India. Also the wedding season as per Hindu calendar saw a huge demand in bridal wear and the retail calendars were planned accordingly. Thus Indian fashion system incorporated the global calendar of Spring/summer and Autumn / winter. India being a tropical country which experiences summer for almost 6 months and winter for 2 months and the other 4 months were the major festive period as most of the market prepares the major stock for this season. The monsoon/ festive lines essentially catered to festive requirements and occasion wear. Autumn/winter was an extension of occasion wear and winter wear which was region specific. The collection for this season was a mini capsule collection just to add on the stock flowing from monsoon/festive.



Plate 4. 20 : Professional roles

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1592618504310398/search/?query=workwear%20>

The sari preference and draping style was unique to each woman and the most influential factor was profession, for one needed to portray the correct image for the profession; entrepreneur, school teacher, officer, stylist, textile designer, curator/ gallerist, dentist etcetera. They all draped the work sari in the *Nivi* style, yet each has a very unique sari type, draping method, draping style, blouse choice and accessories to suit their professional and personal requirements.



Plate 4. 21: Uniforms and dress code

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The sari has proven to be an iconic example of power dressing adopted by top women CEO's, politicians, airhostesses, hospitality industry, sisters of Missionaries etcetera.

The *Nivi* style, securely pleated sari worn with minimum 3 pins was secure enough for a practical fuss free commute to work and long work hours in office.



Plate 4.22 : Manual work draped in practical sari.

[The women who were not used to sari complained that they found it difficult to drape it or work with it at home. However many women led a relatively active and strenuous life and performed manual labor wearing sari, draped snugly yet lending freedom of movement and flowing ends neatly tucked such that they did not hinder their work. A lady draped in a 9 yard sari could ride a motorbike with great ease.](https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1366&bih=662&q=sari+uniforms&oq=sari+uniforms&gs_l=img.3...4964.11519.0.12289.16.15.1.0.0.0.223.1872.0j13j1.14.0....0...1.1.64.img..1.9.1139.0..0j35i39k1j0i30k1j0i5i30k1.tT68JhKeLXw#tbm=isch&q=sari+rural+women&*>https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1366&bih=662&q=sari+uniforms&oq=sari+uniforms&gs_l=img.3...4964.11519.0.12289.16.15.1.0.0.0.223.1872.0j13j1.14.0....0...1.1.64.img..1.9.1139.0..0j35i39k1j0i30k1j0i5i30k1.tT68JhKeLXw#tbm=isch&q=sari+rural+women&*></p></div><div data-bbox=)



Plate 4.23 : Urban middle class working women

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The gender stereotypes were beginning to break in many ways and women were taking up jobs, which were at par or more rewarding than their partner/spouses. The role the women played in society could be understood from the semiotic meanings they conveyed regarding their age, profession, socio-economic status, etc. The urban fashionistas have adopted interesting sari in practical drape with interesting and unconventional styling for daywear. The Airtel cellular network advertisement in which the sari clad woman was the reporting manager for her husband at work and was not satisfied with the work, and asked him to stay back and complete the task. She goes home and cooks a hearty meal for him and sends picture and lets him know that she is waiting for dinner. Thus in this advertisement the sari was represented as feminine authority, yet not in a dominating way but as equals.



Plate 4.24 : Urban home makers

[The homemakers were the ones who took care of all the family members' needs and worked 24X7. They have to run errands for household requirements as well as answer the main door for every visitor, drop and pick up kids from school/bus stop. They ensured every work was done as per schedule; they entertained guests, socialized in the community. It was important for them to indulge themselves once in while with door to door salesman, or online shopping. Outings with friends for shopping and kitty parties during the day were helpful for their own relaxation. A lot of homemakers have discontinued wearing the sari at home due to practical reasons, comfort and fashion trends. However it was important for them to have a few saris for outings; or while hosting guests for special occasions.](https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1366&bih=662&q=saree+city+women&oq=saree+city+women&gs_l=img..3...54805.69420.0.70181.29.23.6.0.0.0.187.2804.1j21.22.0....0...1.1.64.img..1.15.1622.0..0j35i39k1j0i5i30k1j0i8i30k1j0i24k1j0i30k1j0i8i10i30k1j0i10i24k1.ca3hJSEfvyw#tbm=isch&q=saree+homemakers&*>https://www.google.com/search?site=&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1366&bih=662&q=saree+city+women&oq=saree+city+women&gs_l=img..3...54805.69420.0.70181.29.23.6.0.0.0.187.2804.1j21.22.0....0...1.1.64.img..1.15.1622.0..0j35i39k1j0i5i30k1j0i8i30k1j0i24k1j0i30k1j0i8i10i30k1j0i10i24k1.ca3hJSEfvyw#tbm=isch&q=saree+homemakers&*</p></div><div data-bbox=)

4.5 Phase III) Analysis of data and model development

4.5.1. Understanding the semiology of fashion apparel.

Barthes's book and his theory of Semiology of fashion had a profound impact on the field (Barthes, 1990). Fashion he argues is the product of the social relations and activities that are involved in putting an outfit together. Fashion is actualized through the way the garments are worn. Barthes makes a distinction between three kinds of garments:

1. The Real garment
2. The Represented garment
3. And the used Garment, corresponding to the process of production, distribution and consumption.

(Craik, 2009) To develop this Barthes drew on the discipline of semiotics. **Semiology is the science of forms or signs**, and in case of fashion, the forms relate to the garments, details, accessories, and modes of clothes. If we conceive of **elements as signs**, we can see how they compose a **language** of clothes (**Langue**) and the clothed **body** of an individual constitutes a specific statement by way of the **choice and arrangement of clothing (Parole)**. To understand this, we need to break down the idea of a sign into two components: **The signifier - Physical referent**

The Signified – Mental concept implied by signifier

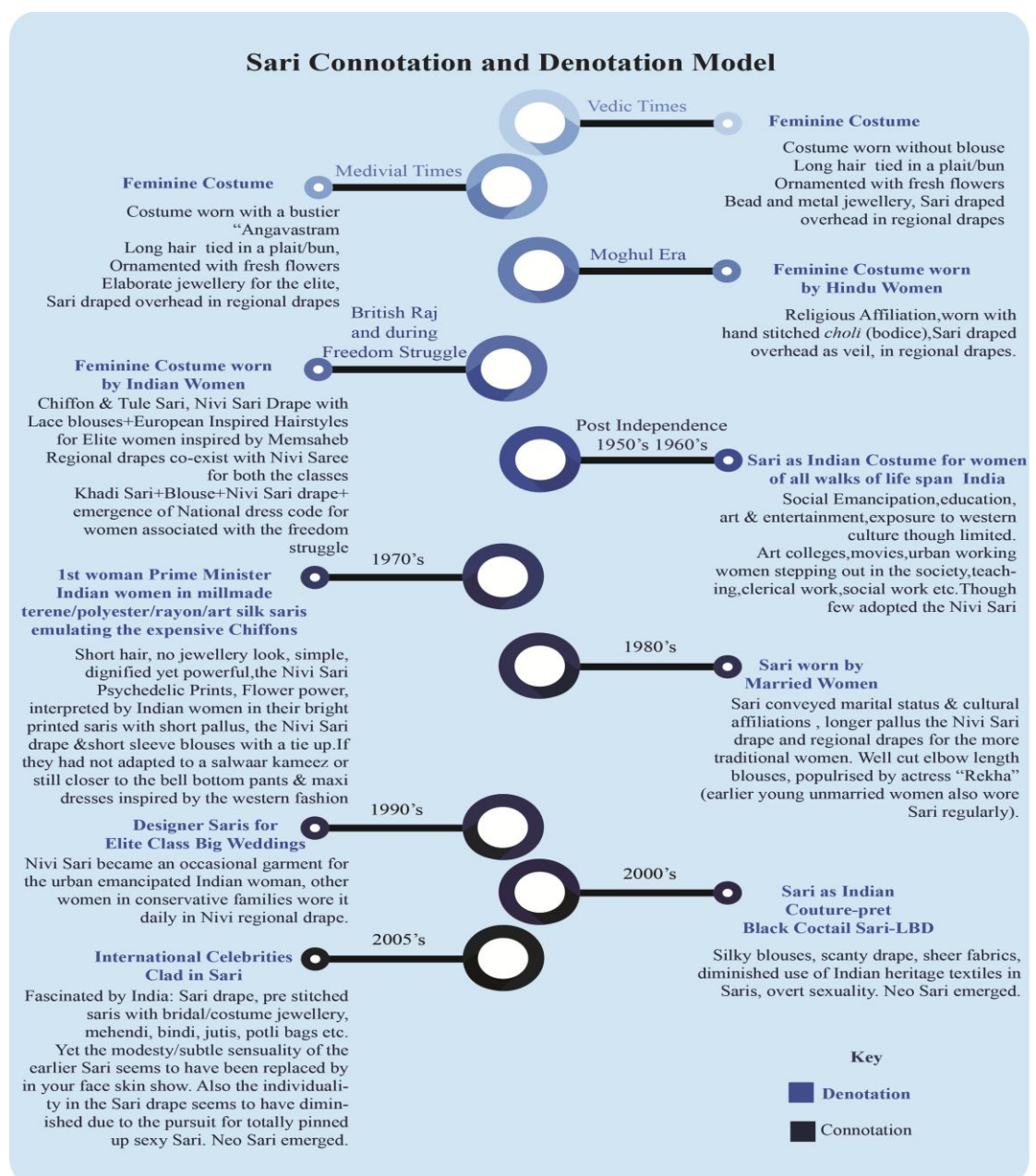
We apparently instinctively read a contextual grammar into our clothing encounters. This contextual reading is a code or set of shared rules that enables us to connect the signifier with the signified contextual codes might include primness, authority, formality, practicality, relaxation & hostility. Some codes may be localized, embedded in a subculture, adopted as national dress or worn across the globe. Thus we need to think of another level of signification:

Denotation - Refers to the straightforward meaning that we attach to clothing.

Connotation -The symbolic embedded meanings of an item of apparel or how it is worn (Craik, 2009).

Hall writes on Matters of interpretation and explained Connotations and denotation: When we speak it is important for the purpose of interpretation to know not just “what is said” (Denotation) but “how it is said” (Connotation). When we wear clothes, it is important not just “What we wear” (Denotation- eg. A Sari) but “how we wear” (Connotation.eg. formal, casual, flamboyant, sensual look sari) (Hall, 2012).The below, model was based on literary and visual references and detailed observations about the sari.

Model . 1: Sari Connotation and Denotation Model



A semiotic theory of fashion explains fashion as a system of signs, symbols and communicative meaning-making that sees items of apparel as a language with a grammar that is composed of symbolic codes. Understanding of internal and external fashion flows is central to the understanding of fashion cycles and systems (Craik, 2009).

The researcher of this study herself (Ms.Vaibbhavi P) has been in the pursuit of engaging with respondents and their views on the sari; therefore joined the closed group of sari lovers on Facebook # Do100Saripact. The idea was to document the use of sari in daily wear, a regular sari wearer and often shared sari stories with friends and acquaintances when the opportunity presented itself. However joining the pact helped her share stories with a larger community and spread the awareness about the various Indian textiles, versatile ways of draping, styling for numerous occasions and the messages she conveyed in a tacit manner: (Refer Plate 4.4 page no. 133)

1. Magenta Maheshwari silk sari with Ikkat blouse for Formal Orientation Program for the new cohort of students,
2. Mint green Chanderi cotton sari with hand block printed blouse for spring semester end Juries.
3. Beige embroidered georgette with grey crop top and wig for Bollywood theme office party,
4. Black hand-embroidered and lace georgette sari with a matching blouse for niece's *Sangeet Sandhya* (pre wedding event with song and dance).
5. Off white Jamdani cotton with back and gold border and pallu for formal conference.
6. Mustard Maheshwari cotton with handblock printed sleeveless blouse for appraisal meetings.
7. Apple green silk with Kalamkari blouse for the Handloom day at the Lakme Fashion week.
8. Teal blue Maheshwari silk with south cotton Navy blouse for home puja.

Slade in his case study on Japan argues that modernity actually stimulates tradition, for in modernity progress is constantly sought, yet constantly questioned, undermined

and remodeled. Modernity, he says everywhere repeatedly clothes itself in reconstructions of the past, recreating a national costume and inventing national traditions to authenticate the very idea of the nation itself. Simultaneously, the significance of place increases with globalization because it represents a threat due to the speed and flexibility with which ideologies and goods flow across national boundaries (Slade, 2009). These theories have been helpful in gaining the understanding of the semiology of fashion apparel.

The way we classify things is important. The need for classification is clearly evident from many human fields. Progress itself seems to depend on it. However, while certain things seem to be amenable to classification, others do not (Hall, 2012).

For instance sari example has been explained below: **what sort of draped apparel should we classify as Sari? Here are some possible responses:**

- 1) All drapes that are worn by women –PUBLIC
- 2) All drapes that women call sari- EXPERT
- 3) All drapes that I call sari- SELF.
- 4) All drapes that are sold in the market as sari -INSTITUTION
- 5) All drapes that are called sari by designers- DESIGNER.
- 6) All drapes that common sense tells us are sari - COMMON SENSE
- 7) All drapes that have the intrinsic properties of sari- QUALITIES OF OBJECT
- 8) All drapes that cause sari like reaction from the viewer – AESTHETIC RESPONSE.

Gestures are rich in meaning as condensed non-verbal source of communication; they appear to be a trouble-free way to express approval or disapproval, affection and disaffection and assent or dissent. Some gestures have more or less universal meanings some seem to have different meanings in different contexts. Some simple gestures can produce grave misunderstandings in a wrong way (Hall, 2012).

The below framework built for this study on Hall's matrix on "Matters of interpretation", allowed understanding communication of the sari in terms of the wider context of society and culture. It was developed after detailed observations and photographic interpretation of the phase II findings. Ethnic outer and over garments like shawls, cardigans, vests, shrugs jackets can be worn over the sari.

Model 2 : Communication of Sari in context of society and culture.

Communication of Sari in context of society and culture.								
Semantic	Sleepwear Sari	Tough Casual wear Sari	Casual wear/ Leisure wear Sari	Work wear Formal Sari	Special Uniform Sari	Semi Formal Cocktail Sari	Evening Formal wear Sari	Festive/ Bridal
Genre	Sleepwear	Tough Casual wear	Casual wear/ Leisure wear Sari	Uniform/ Dress Code	Uniform	Semi-Formals/ Cocktails	Formals	Formals
Style	Functional	Functional	Casual	Functional	Functional	Semi-Formal	Formal/ Dressy	Formal/ Festive
Institution	Home/ Bedroom	Outdoor/ manual labour	Home and outside	Work Place	Factory/ work place	Club/Party	Club/Party	Club/Party
Stereotype	6 yard Comfortable sari	6 yard comfortable sari	6 yard comfortable sari	6 yard synthetic sari easy to wear and maintain	6 yard synthetic sari easy to wear and maintain	6 yard figure reveling sari	6 yard dressy yet light sari	6 yard dressy yet heavy sari
Ideology	Consumerism	Consumerism	Consumerism	Consumerism	Consumerism	Consumerism	Consumerism	Consumerism
Discourse	Need	Need	Want	Need	Need	Want	Want	Want
Myth	Practicality	Practicality	Practicality	Practicality	Practicality	Exhibitionism	Exhibitionism	Exhibitionism
Paradigm	Tradition	Tradition	Modernism	Modernism	Modernism	Post Modernism	Post Modernism	Post Modernism/ Tradition

4.5.2. The semiotic meaning of the Indian sari with the changing role of women in society

Decoding of meaning conveyed by apparel to the observer was helpful in understanding the needs that apparel fulfill. Panelist for the focused group discussion were Rta Kapur Chisti – Textile Scholar and author, Padmashree Wendell Rodricks – Minimalist designer & revivalist , Bhamini Subramaniam – Textile and fashion designer, Karishma Shahani Khan- Founder and Principal designer Ka: Sha design label, Nandita Abraham- CEO Pearl Academy, India. The panelists' responses to the purpose of wearing the sari was very enriching ; where the influence of Portuguese inquisition and Christianity on the *Red Pottuna sari* in Goan culture and offering of

sari to the Goan deity *Shanta Durga* by the Hindu community, significance of the sari for each function in Tamil Brahmin wedding were deliberated. They also discussed the relationship of the mythology and history and suggested that history had to become mythology to stay alive; something that resonated that we use it as history but put it into a mythological context. The panelist carried some examples of their work for sharing and enhancing audience engagements. Chisti gave wonderful demonstration on dimensions of the various handwoven saris and draping styles ranging from traditional to contemporary variants on live models. Wendell quoted the regal and trailing style of sari drape which was first worn by Helen; Greek wife of Hindu Emperor Chandragupta Maurya finds favor even today, though there are other practical draping styles for the working classes.

Nandita Abraham senior corporate professional, expressed that she started wearing a saree after her mid-forties when she switched gears from academics to the corporate world and realized the need to assert her femininity as a woman leader, in a sari at work amongst her peers who were predominantly men wearing suits and she took strong corporate leadership roles. Her change in dressing was acknowledged by her eleven year old son on her birthday cake saying, “*Amma* (Mother) you are a sari not suit!”

Chisti said that the sari was going up in board rooms of MNC’s in India, a lady went to the Bank of America in her slacks/dress and kept a sari in her office closet, and draped it before a meeting, the lady mentioned that when she wore a sari, she was taken more seriously. Another sector which Chisti mentioned was the courtrooms, where the black coats which were very heavy and discomforting; the sari was an ideal way to let the air in and flow for the tropical weather in India.

Working outside of home required women to adopt the more professional and presentable mode of dressing, which was comfortable for the city commute, modest enough to show some authority, social mobility (home to workplace), the work wear requirements of women were very unique to nature of work and individual preferences also were influencers ; the nature of work could vary from stepping out for household chores/ farm work/manual labor /performing arts /prostitutes/ /uniforms /institutional work in offices/ schools/ colleges/ airlines/ hotels/ police/security personnel/ nursing/ in court of law / Board rooms/ on international deputations, etc.

Workwear ranges from casual to formal and includes business dress, have four primary categories: Power Business, General Business, Business Casual (Friday dressing) and uniforms. Uniforms are prescribed way of dressing and often given by the employer to the employee, for building sense of belonging and teamwork within the organization; it served as a brand extension for the employer- employee and conveys a message to the observer about their professional role. Uniforms often have meet some functional and safety requirements besides just psychological association. The concept of modesty is subjective to the cultural norms of the society, and India is ambivalent in this regard where deep backs and sleeveless blouses and bare midriff at workplace seemed to be acceptable, but not many workplaces are open to the idea of short skirts and cleavage showing at workplace.

The sari preference and draping style was unique to each woman and the most influential factor was profession, for one needed to portray the correct image for the profession; entrepreneur, school teacher, officer, stylist, textile designer, curator/ gallerist, dentist. etcetera. They all draped the work sari in the *Nivi* style , yet each has a very unique sari type, draping method, draping style, blouse choice and accessories to suit their professional and personal requirements.(Refer Plate 4.20 on page no. 154)

The sari has proven to be an iconic example of power dressing adopted by top women CEO's, politicians, airhostesses, hospitality industry, sisters of Missionaries etcetera. The *Nivi* style, securely pleated sari worn with minimum 3 pins was secure enough for a practical fuss free commute to work and long work hours in office. (Refer Plate 4.21 on page no. 149)

The gender stereotypes are breaking in many ways and women are taking up jobs, which may be at par or more than their partner/spouses. The role the women play in society can be understood from the semiotic meanings they convey regarding their age, profession, socio-economic status, etc. The urban fashionistas have adopted interesting sari in practical drape with interesting and unconventional styling for daywear. The Airtel advertisement in which the sari clad woman is the reporting manager to her husband at work and is not satisfied with the work, and asks him to stay back and complete it. She goes home and cooks a hearty meal for him and sends

picture and lets him know that she is waiting for dinner. (Refer Plate 4.23 on page no. 151)

The snowball method of sampling and the online tool of data collection responses from respondents pan India, as well as few respondents currently located overseas in U.K. America and Middle East were included for this study. With regard to profession of the respondents; majority of the respondents (44.7%) were working in the private service, (23.4%) some were self-employed, (17.2%) students , (12.5%) homemakers and only 2.3% were in Government Service. They represented age range from 18-24 years to 75 years, however majority of respondents (32 %) was in the range of 35 to 44 years .(Refer Graph 4.2 on page no.96)

The industry sector of the respondents indicated highest number of respondents(42.3%) were from the Apparel/textile field, followed by (34.4 %) academics sector, few were from Retail and Entertainment sector, financial services, aviation and hospitality sector. (Refer Graph 4.3 on page no. 97)

Highest percentage of respondents (22.7%) had annual income more than 15 Lakh INR, also in the range of upto 3 Lakh INR. Highest percentage of respondents (43.8%) had the educational qualification of post-graduation; others had Ph.D., graduation and diplomas too. Represented all types of Marital status ranging from widowed to, live in relationships, unmarried, divorced , Majority of respondents(57.8%) were married. Majority of (88.3%) respondents wore saris often and (74.2%) believed that the sari would continue to be a part of Indian women's bridal trousseau.

Since the earlier survey was not able to adequately cover the women from lower income groups, another survey was conducted using research assistance and documented using online Google forms. Majority of the respondent 28% were working as part time domestic helpers, followed by full time domestic helpers, housekeeping staff, security staff, sales girls and beauticians in local parlors. Majority of the respondents (43%) were in the age range of 25-34 years. Majority 57% of respondents were married, remaining were either unmarried or widowed.

Majority 60% of respondents from lower income group preferred wearing sari daily. The major reason attributed for wearing the sari by respondents was social acceptance. Other reasons attributed for sari wearing were ornamentation and comfort

by respondents from lower income group. Majority of (72%) respondents preferred wearing sari to work and the major reason they stated was that they found it to be comfortable and 28% did not prefer to wear the sari to work, stated the major reason was that they found difficulty to work wearing a sari.

The purpose of wearing the sari indicated by (57.0%) majority of the middle and high income group women respondents was ornamentation, remaining indicated any other, social acceptance, comfort and the least number indicated modesty. (Refer Graph 4.8 and on page no.99)

The responses in the survey and the focused group discussion were further endorsed in the interpretations of the case studies. The association of the sari and Indian women begins at an early stage of doll play and dressing up the dolls, role play of an older lady they like eg, mother, teacher etc. Teachers' day in school, of some performance on stage.

Commercial gratification in the form of sari clad Barbie dolls or other dolls. Pre-stitched saris were available readily for young girls for festivals and weddings or dance performances.

Also as rite of passage the preferred dress for school/college farewells or convocations was often the sari, which was most likely the first sari a girl gets for her, or was borrowed from mother's wardrobe. Then it continues as a Sari day in college and photo opportunity in Indian clothes. This continues as one grows up, the sari worn for a friend's or family member's wedding, or often own wedding, or at work or formal evenings. (Refer Plate 4.5 on page no.134)

Across age groups the modern style of sari draping, 6yard sari with tailored matching blouse was preferred. The women in the picture prefer draping their sari pallu in free falling single layer, pinned on the left shoulder. Some are standing or sitting comfortably at home or outside the home, at ease with their sari. The image of the young girl in the rust colored sari is good example of initiation to the sari for a school activity; role playing a more grown up look like the teacher or mother.(Refer Plate 4.2 on page no.135)

A personal interview schedule was conducted and responses from 35 men respondents were recorded online to gain an understanding about their views on the meaning of the sari. The majority (40%) of men respondents were designers, followed by businessmen, managers and only (9%) few enthusiasts. None of the respondents were below 18 years of age; maximum respondents (46%) were in the age range of 35-44 years. Maximum respondents (57%) were married. None of the respondents said that women would discontinue wearing the sari, (29%) few men indicated that the women would continue wearing the sari everyday: whereas maximum men (66%) confirmed that women would wear sari only on festive occasions and weddings. (Refer Graph 4.39 on page no.120)

The occasion for wearing the sari for the first time for maximum respondents (37.5%) was for wedding in the family or friends' wedding, followed closely by (36.7%) farewell party at school or college, remaining (16.4%) indicated any other ;gave varied reasons like after marriage, festivals or offering *pooja*, dress code, love for sari, wedding proposal meet, sari day etc.(5.5%) Few wore it first time on their own wedding day and few also the first time to work. (Refer Graph 4.10 and on page no. 100)

Results regarding relationship between the sari and factors of lifestyle change for middle and upper middle class women respondents indicated that; majority of respondents 35% rated self-image the highest, followed by 31% to Lifestyle factors, 18 % ethic group and 15% Relationship status. There were other factors which the respondents thought were influential like Professional status, Family context, Mode of transport, politics, change in profession, type of work environment etcetera. (Refer Graph 4.18 and on page no. 106)

The photographic decoding of case studies gave further qualitative results which are discussed in-depth. While at home or outside the home, often at ease with their sari. The sari preference and draping style was unique to each woman and the most influential factor was profession; for one needed to portray the correct image for the profession. The sari has proven to be an iconic example of power dressing adopted by top women CEO's, politicians, airhostesses, hospitality industry, sisters of Missionaries etcetera. The gender stereotypes were beginning to break in many ways and women were taking up jobs, which were at par or more rewarding than their

partner/spouses. The role the women played in society could be understood from the semiotic meanings they conveyed regarding their age, profession, socio-economic status etcetera.

The homemakers were the ones who took care of all the family members' needs and worked 24X7. They have to run errands for household requirements as well as answer the main door for every visitor, drop and pick up kids from school/bus stop. They ensured every work was done as per schedule; they entertained guests, socialized in the community. It was important for them to indulge themselves once in while with door to door salesman, or online shopping. Outings with friends for shopping and kitty parties during the day were helpful for their own relaxation. A lot of homemakers have discontinued wearing the sari at home due to practical reasons, comfort and fashion trends. However it was important for them to have a few saris for outings; or while hosting guests for special occasions. (Refer Plate 4. 20 on page no.149)

The urban fashionistas have adopted interesting saris in practical drape with interesting and unconventional styling for daywear; making it difficult to identify the regional identity of the wearer. The *Nivi* style, securely pleated sari worn with minimum 3 pins was secure enough for a practical fuss free commute to work and long work hours in office. The women who were not used to sari complained that they found it difficult to drape it or work with it at home. However many women led a relatively active and strenuous life and performed manual labor wearing sari, draped snugly yet lending freedom of movement and flowing ends neatly tucked such that they did not hinder their work. A lady draped in a 9 yard sari could ride a motorbike with great ease. (Refer Plate 4.22 on page no. 150)

The depiction of women as homemakers has been very well stereotyped in detergent advertisements. Till the 1900's majority of Indian Homemakers were sari clad (for daily chores) and stayed at home and eventually the homemakers moved to other ways of dressing in form of salwaar-kameez dupatta, trousers and kurti (Tunic), trousers and shirt also started working out of the house along with housework. The last commercial advertisement depicts empathetic father who realizes that men need to share the load with the homemakers. Though the example was not directly related

to the sari, it was reflection of the changing role and status of women in society and gender equations. (Refer Plate 4.6 on page no.135)

Despite the acceptance of new ways of dressing , globalization and information technology changing almost everything right from how clothing was manufactured, sold and consumed the sari has withstood the changes and adapted to the new world. Satellite television changed our daily lifestyle and the soap opera characters became very influential, their onscreen dressing became huge influence for sari fashion, they endorsed brands selling online as well as in local markets pan India. Social Media was a great influencer for high end designer saris like Satya Paul which had a Google graphic inspired sari presented on the fashion ramp and also mass manufactured sari with Social media icons inspired print worn by a common woman on the street. Multinational brands made significant impact on Indian lifestyle; however the advertisement adapted to suggest that Indian women could flaunt their curves in a sari (instead of a western dress) after using their product, Eg. Kellogs corn flakes. Since women were not accustomed to wearing the sari regularly, many women were not able to drape it comfortably by themselves. Hence special sari draping experts were in demand either for conducting workshops/demonstration or for customized draping for clients before the occasion. (Refer Plate 4.7 on page no.136)

Wearing a new sari (draped garments, stitching is considered to be impure) for religious ceremonies or offering puja at temples or during festivals at home, it was considered auspicious. Karva chauth was a huge festival in North India, where the married ladies were dressed in their bridal dress or sari and offer prayers for the long life of their husbands. The colorcode for this *puja* was red, however other warm /bright colors are also worn these days.

People also went on holy pilgrimages to various shrines eg.“*Pandharpur Waari*” in Maharashtra, India, often the rural pilgrims walk long distances and saris are draped in their traditional style. However with the growing mass production, affordability and ease in maintenance they have moved from the local handloom weaves to mill made, synthetic, printed versions in bright colors. The draping style popular amongst the younger women is the *Nivi* style. (Refer Plate 4.18 on page no.147)

The major Indian festivals *Holi*, *Ganesh Utsav*, *Navratri /Durga Pujo*, *Diwali* etcetera were occasions for family reunions and celebrations, so the best saris were worn even by women who have discontinued wearing saris on a daily basis. The festive saris were dressier and elaborate compared to dailywear or workwear sari. The festive saris helped them to be rooted to tradition and customs, regional drapes and jewelry were worn. Women bought and gifted saris during these festivals and wedding season.

Indian Fashion calendar was planned to cater to consumer demands during regional festivals starting from August to December across India. Also the wedding season as per Hindu calendar saw a huge demand in bridal wear and the retail calendars were planned accordingly. Thus Indian fashion system incorporated the global calendar of Spring/summer and Autumn / winter. India being a tropical country which experiences summer for almost 6 months and winter for 2 months and the other 4 months were the major festive period as most of the market prepares the major stock for this season. The monsoon/ festive lines essentially catered to festive requirements and occasion wear. Autumn/winter was an extension of occasion wear and winter wear which was region specific. The collection for this season was a mini capsule collection just to add on the stock flowing from monsoon/festive. (Refer Plate 4.19 on page no.148)

Marriages in India were really a huge celebration not only for the bride, but for the extended family and the community at large; where everyone turned out in the best that they can afford. Indian marriage ceremonies went on for couple of days and there were many pre and post wedding occasions which also constituted the bridal trousseau and requirements for the family and wedding guests. The color code for *Haldi* ceremony was yellow, where the bride was blessed and *haldi* (Turmeric and other auspicious herbs) were applied to the bride , which serves as an natural antiseptic and adds warm glow to the bride in anticipation of the wedding.

All the brides wore the traditional costumes for the wedding ceremony. The degree of ornamentation had increased over a period of time.

The overall presentation of the fashion look seems to represent the exhibitionism of the economic boom synonymous to the Big Fat Indian wedding, which was much simpler in closed economy of the 80's.

Over a period of time the transition from the real garment to the represented garment was evident. One could observe that as the brides were getting emancipated even as they adorned a represented garment, they were confident about showing their real personas during the wedding ceremonies, in contrast to socially acceptable shy representation of the bride of the 80's.

The brides of the new millennium often were unfamiliar to the fit and feel of the traditional costumes and adorned their designer bridal dresses only once or very rarely repeated it later in life. They were not used to carrying the heavy costume, drapes and jewelry. As they had worn casualwear or work formal fashions till that day. The neue brides seek specialist professional help for draping, makeup and poise. In earlier time the brides married at a younger age and were groomed to wear a sari and carry themselves well at home and were dressed up by friends and cousins retaining the family traditions. The bridal wear was heirloom and worn often on important occasion post the wedding too. In both cases the elder women gave the approving nod as an endorsement at least on the wedding day! It may therefore be accepted that the wedding dress has become a costume with the expansion of the Indian fashion system over the decades. The wedding dress simulated the strongest construct of the hyper reality that the neue Indian women seek. The wedding look was complete with coordinated accessories; owned or borrowed. (Refer Plate 4.16 on page no.144)

The comparison of results from the three groups of respondents indicated that majority of men (46%) and middle and upper income group women (32%) were in the age group of 35-44 years, and majority of lower income group women (43%) were in the age range of 25-34 year of age, which was almost 10 years younger than the other two groups. The results indicated that majority of the respondents in all the three groups were married.

Appraisals regarding the view on the practice of wearing the sari (29%) few men respondents said that sari will continue to be everyday wear and majority of men (66%) said it will worn for festive occasions and weddings; (49%) there was almost positive response towards women wearing sari to work by the men.

The responses of women in upper and higher income group; indicated that majority (88%) wore the sari. Regarding the practice of wearing the sari in future and the

number of sari wearers reducing (53.1%) and number of sari wearers not reducing (46.9%) was found to be very close. Majority (72.7%) of respondents said it would continue to be an integral part of the wardrobe. Majority (74.2%) also said the sari would continue to be a part of the Indian women's bridal trousseau.

The majority (60%) of lower income group women wore sari daily, majority of respondents from this group preferred wearing sari to work (72%) and the major reason they stated was that they found it to be comfortable. The responses regarding the "discomfort while working wearing a sari" were also substantial in all the three group, at the same time there was agreement on the major reasons attributed for women continuing to wear sari "It is a very graceful draped garment, "Very comfortable for the wearer" and "It is sensuous garment". This quantitative data supported the qualitative observations by the expert panelist and case studies that the Indian sari would continue to be worn across socio- economic group, for everyday wear as well as special occasions, the details and variations would be varied and unique to each woman. It was difficult to rely solely on the quantitative data in this study as cross referencing of data showed contradictory results when it comes to sari preference for each individual sari wearer.

4.5.3. The semiotic interpretation of the Indian sari by trade organizations/ industry and designers

The Indian sari has continued to be worn for almost 5000 years; the panelists shared some iconic sari stories which touched upon tradition, aesthetic appeal, comfort, national identity. Textile scholar, Chisti opined that sari was something about identity, being traditional. It was a way of remembering where we came from and paying a tribute to a garment; which is conceived in 2 dimensions of warp and weft on the loom and worn in three dimensions as draped garment. It is an ingenious garment in a country which is 10 months warm and one or two months of good weather. What is ingenious is that it is capable, unlike the kimono of constant recreation and reinvention, it was not static.

Minimalist Designer Wendell Rodricks liked the sari from the beginning of his career and mentioned that throughout his journey as designer, tutor, robust researcher and

revivalist of the Goan Kunbi Sari, he has done some path breaking work of re-forestation and cultivating the natural dye “*manjestha*” (Madder – red pigment dye derived from roots) and indigo, reviving the handloom traditions and applied his unique design sensibilities to reinvent the “Wendell Rodricks’ *kunbi sari*” which is white with *ikkat* accents of red and black, weighs about 500gms, as he felt curvy Indian women, who he referred as “voluptuous goddesses” should not feel the weight of the sari. Wendell opined that the sari is a “very intelligent garment” as it was invented to give length with the pleats, goes around on bias and hugging voluptuous Indian hips with a big cascade at the back which cuts the hips to half.

Karishma Shahani Khan, young designer spoke about a relatively latent acknowledgement of the sari in her school days, however she drew inspiration from her Indian heritage textiles and sari when she worked on her graduation collection in UK and continues to be the signature for her label quirky Ka:sha.

All panelists unanimously agreed that the sari segment/industry was not a sunset industry and the sari would remain an integral part of wardrobe, despite the decrease in number of sari clad women in daily wear. The Indian sari as work formalwear would be more evident in comparison to the western suit. They stated reasons why they felt so. Abraham a senior corporate professional, expressed that she started wearing a saree after her mid-forties when she switched gears from academics to the corporate world and realized the need to assert her femininity as a woman leader, in a sari at work amongst her peers who were predominantly men wearing suits and she took strong corporate leadership roles.

The majority of men respondents were designers, followed by businessmen, managers and only few enthusiasts. None of the respondents were below 18 years of age; maximum respondents were in the age range of 35-44 years. Maximum respondents were married. None of the respondents said that women would discontinue wearing the sari, few men indicated that the women would continue wearing the sari everyday; whereas maximum men confirmed that women would wear sari only on festive occasions and weddings.

According to the men respondents the Indian sari has continued to be worn for almost 5000 years, due to following reasons in the descending order tradition, aesthetic

appeal, and comfort. The remaining few men listed open ended reasons. According to men respondents the women wore sari for due to the following reasons, majority of the women wore sari for social acceptance, followed by ornamentation and least for modesty. The men's preference of women wearing sari to work indicated that few were unsure and gave neutral response of "maybe", however maximum gave the positive response of and remaining very few responded negatively.

The major reason attributed by men respondents for women continuing wearing sari was (60%) "It is a very graceful draped garment, only very few stated the reasons "Very comfortable for the wearer" and "It is sensuous garment". However 14% stated "it is difficult to work in a sari". Additional feedback on whether men thought that women in saris look more appealing or powerful or graceful indicated diverse responses". (Refer Graph 4.43 on page no.123):

"It provides for a certain metamorphosis. The sari can change a girl to a woman, a submissive woman to a powerful force, and demure lass to a sexy siren."

"The wearing of sarees should be a matter of personal choice and style. Their appeal is governed by the wearer's persona and ability to carry them."

"Women surely looks graceful and powerful wearing a sari, it gives that aesthetic look and bring on sense of comfort and confidence in them."

"A woman draped in a sari is instantly noticeable and appreciated. Her beauty emanates further through the garment."

The men respondents recommendation for sari for each activity indicated that majority "Handloom look" for festivals, "Formal pleated pallu sari" for Dailywear at work, "Bollywood Kitsch" for parties, "Chiffon elegance" for parties , "Regal Flamboyance" for weddings. "Neo Look" was not recommended for any of the occasions. The men's responses indicated that "handloom look" sari would continue to be worn the most, followed by "Formal pleated pallu sari", "Chiffon elegance" and "Regal Flamboyance". None of the men respondents indicated the continuation of the "Bollywood Kitsch" and "Neo Look". (Refer Graph 4.43 on page no.123)

Buying Behavior: Majority of men respondents bought saris as gifts for mothers and majority of them did not prefer to buy saris as gifts for colleagues. A good number of

respondents bought saris for wives and friends but were afraid of disappointing the recipients. Good number of women from lower income group were very satisfied with saris which their Boss/ employer gifted them. And the sari gifts which were not found to be satisfactory were further passed away as gifts across the socio-economic groups. The gifting of sari was very common at every rite of passage in a woman's life in Indian tradition. When a baby girl/boy was born, infant layette made of old soft cotton sari was gifted, when a girl reached puberty, when she graduated / completed her formal education, school/college farewell, when a lady got married, welcoming the new bride, when a lady was pregnant at the baby shower, when the lady delivered a baby, naming ceremony of the baby and marriage of children the mother was given a sari, on all major festivals or any good occasion , or to make up after a domestic quarrel, when the lady was widowed and also when she died, the new sari was draped on her dead body for the last rites. The sari whether purchased for self-consumption or as gift for various occasions; purchased by women or men as gift of love or social obligation or to express status and tastes there were deep semiotic interpretation embedded in each transaction which affected the multi million rupees sari trade.

The most preferred sources for buying saris for men respondents are local shops/markets and malls, and the least preferred options are borrowed, second-hand and resale. However the preferred sources ranking from 1-8 was spread evenly for the Street vendors /Door to door salesman, Exhibition/fairs, Online shopping and TV shopping. Majority of the men respondents were satisfied with the sari collection of their spouse/partners. It could also be the major reason why most of them may have agreed to answer the survey pertaining to drape which is often perceived to be feminine garment; they also represent the fashion industry perspective.

Majority of respondents from lower income group prefer to source or buy saris from local market /shops and good number of respondents have least preferred malls, street vendors/door to door salesman, secondhand/resale, exhibition/fairs, online shopping and TV shopping.(Refer Graph 4.34 on page no.118)

However for the middle and higher income group women when the sources for sari buying were ranked the highest score was for local sari showrooms, followed closely in the descending order by chain retail showrooms, Exhibitions and fairs, borrowing from other wardrobes, designers, online shopping, from door to door salesman, and

least by T.V. shopping.(Refer Graph 4.11 on page no.101). The majority of 71.1% of respondents got information for sari buying by the word of mouth, followed by the Internet, Magazines, few got information from other source, Newspapers, and Television.(Refer Graph 4.12 on page no.106). The ranking for factors influencing choice of sari indicated the highest score of 2.93 was for Fashion trends, followed closely by 2.88 for budget, 2.60 for recommendation by friend or family, and least score of 1.59 for Media celebrity endorsement.(Refer Graph 4.13 on page no.102)

The qualitative results on the basis of observations noted from industry case studies are put forth comprehensively. The sari was often considered a women's draped garment, however Himanshu Verma, prides himself as the sari man, has undertaken many sari sustenance events and given the slogan "Jai Sari". A lot of designers irrespective of their gender were working on finding a new meaning of the sari for the contemporary women. (Refer Plate 4. 8 on page no.137)

The Sari shopping experience was very unique, traditionally it was low seating on mattresses covered in white sheets. The salesman would keep spreading multiple saris till the ladies were flattered. The relationship with the customers and the convincing skills - glib of the salesman were unmatched. They often helped the customer to drape the sari on the spot. Or draped it on own selves which help one visualize better and take a decision; much before the concept of a trial room came into practice in Indian ready to wear segment. Another interesting observation was that sari shopping was seldom a solitary experience; one would have the most trusted friend, partner along. If it was a group of women then it was more entertaining, usually the case for festive or wedding shopping. With the onset of online shopping a lot of women were considering that option, where you could see the draped sari in all angles before taking the final call. And you could get finished sari with the fall attached, edges picoted, polishing for heavy saris, customized blouse (if that service was available) etcetera. Thus a ready to wear sari delivered at the doorstep, off course at a premium and was very convenient for the busy lifestyle. (Refer Plate 4.15 on page no.143)

The comparison of results from the three groups of respondents regarding their sari buying (sourcing) practices indicated that majority of men and women from middle and upper income group preferred the local shops and markets, malls and chain-stores. The data indicated that there were multiple type of preferences for each option

of sourcing saris and there was no direct correlation between women from middle and upper income group and women from lower income group responses. There it was observed that the lower income group preferred shopping in the local shops and markets too and a good majority indicated that they did not buy from exhibitions, malls, online or TV shopping mode was not very popular till the time of the studying the lower income groups. It is also noteworthy that the growing popularity and convenience of online shopping has led to co-existence of both “Brick and Click” mode of buying saris amongst the middle and upper classes. The qualitative data often has been helpful in verifying the soundness and cross referencing of quantitative data for gaining deeper insights on buying behavior.

4.5.4. Interpreting the semiotics of the sari for trend mapping

Designers shared their approach for making the Indian sari relevant with changing lifestyles and trend mapping. Panelists were of the belief that each individual needed to explore their unique way of dressing and agreed that the sari allowed the wearer that freedom to express their aesthetic, whether it was the Bollywood kitsch, opulent Rajasthani Maharani look, minimalist look, postmodern neo sari, traditional hand spun and handloom or the flashy mill made knock offs. The classic traditional sari, incorporating vintage styling and heirloom pieces were found to be trending. This eclectic mix was helpful in defining the neo sari as the phase of flux passed by. They suggested that we search inside and find the essence of where we were especially at times of weddings and celebrations because we were the only country in the world which had the legacy of legacy of almost 5000 years of wearing our heritage.

Karishma commented that people were forgetting to be themselves and wanted to be dressed like what some “brand” was selling and asked people to take her clothes and suggested them to wear them in their own unique way, also wondered when a sari stopped being a sari and transformed into something else, when someone drapes a sari as dhoti., which she found interesting. Today people were getting stitched, pre stitched clothes, and it was important to tell young people that there was only that much you could do, while draping a sari gave multiple options. She felt that there was a lot more education on the sari and it was an integral part of Indian woman’s wardrobe, more Indian women would wear a sari to weddings or an event as one got more comfortable and adapted to wearing the saris, which were lighter and airy.

Bhamini suggested that younger women needed to be given sari consciousness in family, media, colleges and importance of heritage and be complimented for the beautiful turnout in a sari.

Bhamini suggested that younger women needed to be given sari consciousness in family, media, colleges and importance of heritage and be complimented for the beautiful turnout in a sari. Bhamini mentioned the women in Indian villages may still have handloom saris but lot of them have moved to millmade saris, and gave an example of **bandhani** (a traditional fabric tie and dye technique) print on mill made sari. The city women wore a sari with an attitude to express their style.

Wendell shared that when he came back to India from Paris he observed two popular aesthetics: the opulent **Rajasthani Maharaja look** in wedding scene, it was saddening to see the loss of heritage and culture and to see lahenga-choli in a south Indian & Bengali weddings and the **Bollywood kitsch**, fashion. So he decided to go with peace of south Indian temples, *yoga*, *ayurveda* in his minimalism inspired work. He suggested that we search inside and find the essence of where we were especially at times of weddings and celebrations because we were the only country in the world which had the legacy of more than 4000-6000 years of wearing our legacy. He applauded the audience for keeping the legacy of the sari alive in varied hues and varieties of saris.

Chisti mentioned a sense of displacement and that we had given up settling, we had given up the ability to think and reflect, also the ability to stand for oneself, its ability to show ones assets and not short comings in the body. This imitative phase was going and hierarchy was built into human beings, we could give the best in terms of equal opportunity but the outcomes would be based on capabilities, which one could see in our own families. She mentioned her interest in spinning process as it was very unique to India and could give the characteristic texture to silks and cottons. The skill level required for weaving was much higher, however many more people could hand spin. Hand spinning process, **khadi** provided this unique texture; which was the rationale of using **khadi**, as well as employment, at least 20 people were required for the process of cleaning, combing, carding and spinning to support a single handloom. She urged the audience if one could appreciate chiffon for its smoothness, learn to appreciate the unique texture of cotton for roughness. She mentioned the hybrid

organic cotton was very smooth and the Chinese silk too, leading to a very uniform yarn which did not give sufficient weight and texture to the fabric to be draped as sari; the sari stood like a ship in that case. She discouraged long term grants rather recommended push starts to weavers for a sustainable growth and self-supporting economy and also said its time for designer to go back to fabric. This is how the real industry structure could be established. She said that the distinguishing feature about the sari was its structure: the body, two borders and *pallu*. She gave a very interesting demonstration about the different measures, dimensions and constructions of the varied saris, also some interesting sari draping styles.

Ms. Laila Tyabji is a renowned Indian textile curator and revivalist. She has diligently taken daily picture of herself draped in her unique collections of exquisite cotton saris and written explicitly about each sari story and posted on social Media. On the right side she was taking picture of herself in exquisite silk saris; with the close up of distinguishing features of her collection of handpicked saris. Her endeavor was to promote authentic handcrafted Indian textiles and educated the masses and she is a noted sari connoisseur. (Refer Plate 4. 3 on page no. 132)

Undoubtetly the sari qualifies to be the most apt ambassador /icon for the textile trade across the socio-economic pyramid in India, with its diverse manifestations in design, material and drape. What was most relevant today was that it also has a very sustainable life cycle. When no longer wearable as a sari, it could be re-purposed for decoration or other use (made-ups). Traditional embroidery like the kantha of bengal or Sujani of Bihar were excellent examples of sustainable practices to convert saris into useful made-ups like quilts, bedcovers , throws, purses etcetera. Traditionally the infant's layette was made from used soft cotton saris, as new fabric would be too rough on its tender skin. Worn out saris were also re-purposed to make scarves, bandages, filter cloth for water, fabric to cover pickle jars, rags, wipes and mops. Thus every piece of the sari would be put to good use till finally it could be easily biodegraded. Traditionally the saris were woven from breathable natural fibres like cotton and silk, which are appropriate for the humid climate of the Gangetic belts and the coastal regions, the traditional weaves produced on handloom and powerloom are the second largest means of employment , after agriculture in India. By opting for traditional saris we support ethnic craft sustenance by endorsing the masterpieces of

the Indian craft persons. The need of the hour therefore is to innovate and establish efficient supply chains and sustainable product life cycles. Sourcing of fibres from surrounding areas, and regional consumption results in shorter and sustainable supply chains. Opting for hand woven organic cotton saris, ahimsa silk(Peace silk- where silk worm are not killed for silk reeling) and natural silk saris (*Eri, Tussar and Muga* are 3 varieties of wild silk available in India) will sustain ethical practices and responsible fashion.

In the Postmodern era, the sari has found new meaning for the Indian women across geographic and socio-economic strata. The preference of women in Indian villages and cities differed. The two predominant classic looks were the chiffon and pearl elegance in the business community and handloom sari in the elite and educated classes. The affordable imitations for both the looks as well as Bollywood interpretations were available for the urban working class and it had lately reached the rural centers too.

Nandita Abraham said that in India people bought a lot of silk saris when someone was getting married, and recommended need for bringing saris in daily wear; people often told her that it was difficult to wear a sari, but she found it very easy to wear a sari and said that familiarity would make it easier.

In response to sari continuing to be a part of Indian women's bridal trousseau, majority 74.2% indicated it would continue. Multiple responses for the future look of the Bridal trousseau sari were received ; majority said traditional and family heirlooms to keep the traditions and customs alive, some suggested *lehanga* and sari would co- exist, unusual new designer looks, some said it would not change and some said it could be pre-stitched. The inter-caste marriages were on rise and one could see a good mix of customs from both the communities and the influence of changing lifestyles, grooming practices in the bridal fashions the pinned sari or a semi stitched sari may have practicality, but it made the sari very stiff and she would not recommend a cut and sew sari. However for the sole purpose of practicality and unfamiliarity of sari draping there would be some takers for the pre-stitched saris.

More Indian women were likely to wear sari only for the festive & formal occasion; panelists recommended bringing saris in daily wear, often people found it difficult to wear a sari, but suggested that familiarity would make it easier. The sari continued to be one of the most sensuous garments in world and can make a thin girl look voluptuous and a fat woman look sensuous; emphasized that the sari continued to be a better option to western gown.

Survey results of the middle and higher income group women indicate that Majority (59.4%) of the respondents started wearing the sari before the age of 20 years, remaining started wearing it between 21-24 years, 25-28 years, 29-32 years, after 40 years of age, very few started wearing it between 37-40 years and none of the respondents started wearing the sari between 33-36 years of age.(Refer Graph 4.9 on page no.100).

The occasion for wearing the sari for the first time for maximum respondents (37.5%) was for wedding in the family or friends' wedding, followed closely by (36.7%) farewell party at school or college, remaining (16.4%) indicated any other ;gave varied reasons like after marriage, festivals or offering *pooja*, dress code, love for sari, wedding proposal meet, sari day etc.(5.5%) Few wore it first time on their own wedding day and few also the first time to work. (Refer Graph 4.10 on page no.100)

Ranking regarding difficulty in wearing the sari by the contemporary women saw the following scores, highest score 3.93 was for finding a good sari-blouse tailor, followed by 3.47 for Difficulty in commuting in public transport, 3.17 for Difficulty in Maintenance, 2.93 for Difficulty in finding a good matching blouse, and 2.86 Difficult to drape the sari. However a lot of respondents found one or more parameter not applicable to them. 37 respondents did not find it difficult to maintain saris and 21 did not find it difficult to find a good sari blouse tailor. (Refer Graph 4.19 on page no.107)

Response towards difficulty for young women to wear Saris in India today, majority (47.7%) found it to be difficult and the opinion was divided amongst the remaining respondents who found it easy or were not very sure. When asked the reasons for their response, multiple reasons were given which broadly were ; about not being used to

wearing sari, busy lifestyle, comfortable, difficulty in commuting, draping, and maintenance. (Refer Graph 4.22 on page no.109)

On the contrary the result indicated that there were many advantages of wearing the Indian sari, the highest score 4.7 for a. Individual style, 3.38 for c. Social acceptance, 3.08 for e. Versatile garment, 2.79 .d. Same sari can be worn even when the body size changes, and least 2.68 for b. Allows to flaunt body curves (Refer Graph 4.16 on page no.104)

The results for the preferred number of saris for each category; to cover all the requirements of the sari for an individual indicated the average score on number of saris saw the highest number 8 each for Daily wear sari and Workwear Sari, average number 7 for Traditional saris, average number 6 each for all the remaining like Exclusive designer saris, Bridal Sari and Fancy Partywear sari.(Refer Graph 4.17.on page no.105)

However it is observed that 210 instances of respondents giving no preference for atleast one sari category. (27%) of respondents giving no response to D. Bridal sari, (16%)Exclusive designer saris, (15%) to C. Daily wear sari, (14%) to E. Fancy Party wear sari, (8%) F. Workwear Sari and (5%) to B. Traditional saris. (Refer Graph 4.17 on page no.105)

Results regarding relationship between the sari and factors of lifestyle change for middle and upper middle class women respondents indicated that; majority of respondents 35% rated self-image the highest, followed by 31% to Lifestyle factors, 18 % ethic group and 15% Relationship status. There were other factors which the respondents thought were influential like Professional status, Family context, Mode of transport, politics, change in profession, type of work environment etcetera. (Refer Graph 4.18 on page no.106)

Majority of the respondents from lower income group had more than 6 saris for daily wear at home & work also for festival. Majority of women had 3-6 saris for weddings and party wear. However percentage of party wear saris being more than 6 and none at all was the same. Majority of respondents preferred to wear synthetic sari for daily wear at home and work. Majority of respondents preferred to wear light weight shiny sari with zari embroidery for festivals and parties. Majority preferred to wear heavy

silk (or artificial silk) with zari embroidery for weddings. It may have been influenced by the traditional Maharashtrian woven bridal saris.(Refer Graph 4.30 on page no.114)

Majority of respondents from lower income group never received any sari as gifts from husband, friends or during weddings. Good majority were very satisfied with sari gifts they received from employers/boss, followed by in-laws and parents. While a few were dissatisfied with sari gifts received from parents too. The feedback on passed down saris had many different perspectives, few of them preferred to pass down their own saris to family in the villages, they accepted passed down saris which were easy to maintain and if they were in good condition. “Used saris drape better on the body and become softer with every use. If its handwoven or cotton product, adds a special emotional connect.” Few of them did not wear passed down saris, but instead passed them on further. (Refer Graph 4.31 on page no.115)

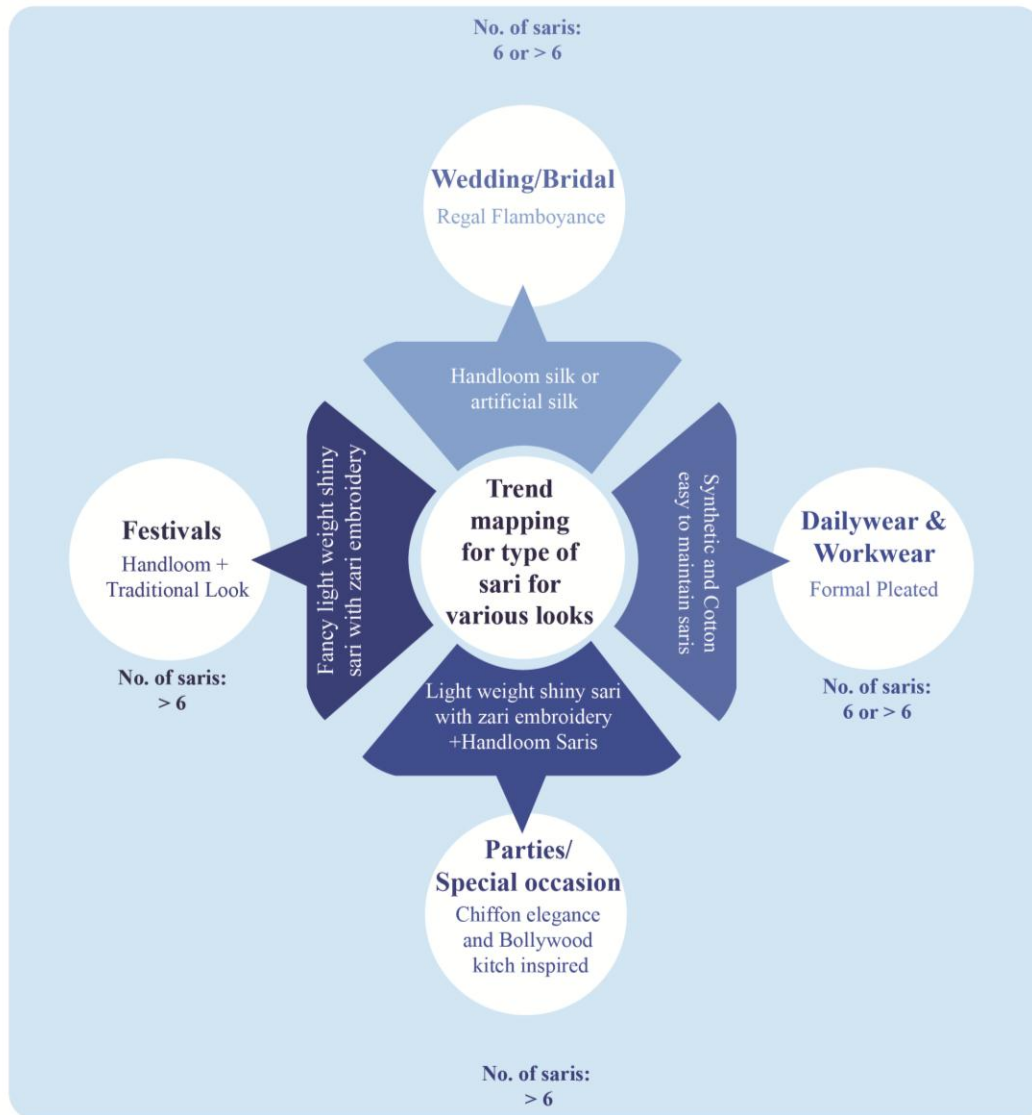
Majority of respondents from lower income group preferred to source or buy saris from local market /shops and good number of respondents have least preferred malls, street vendors/door to door salesman, secondhand/resale, exhibition/fairs, online shopping and TV shopping. (Refer Graph 4.34 on page no.118)

However for the middle and higher income group women ranking for preferred source for sari buying indicated the highest score for local sari showrooms, followed closely in the descending order by chain retail showrooms, Exhibitions and fairs, borrowing from other wardrobes, designers, online shopping , from door to door salesman, and least by T.V. shopping. (Refer Graph 4.11 on page no.101). The majority of 71.1% of respondents got information for sari buying by the word of mouth, followed by the Internet, Magazines, few got information from other source, Newspapers, and Television. (Refer Graph 4.12 on page no.102). The ranking for factors influencing choice of sari indicated the highest score of 2.93 was for Fashion trends, followed closely by 2.88 for budget, 2.60 for recommendation by friend or family, and least score of 1.59 for Media celebrity endorsement. (Refer Graph 4.13 on page no.102). Majority of respondents gave a neutral response to their level of satisfaction with their sari collection.

The contemporary interpretation of the belted sari, sari paired with trousers, shorts, jackets, pre stitched –gown like , incorporating new age materials and finishing techniques had given a new lease of life to the historic draped garment, the sari. International luxury brands like Hermes’ known for its silk scarves have also launched sari collections for premium connoisseurs. (Refer Plate 4.13 on page no.141)

Social media saw a new trend of many stylists/ bloggers posting interesting interpretation of the sari styled for the post-modern women; made heads turn and yet gave that edgy or quirky look. Also the classic traditional sari, incorporating vintage styling and heirloom pieces continued trending. This eclectic mix would be helpful in defining the neo sari after the phase of flux passed by. (Refer Plate 4.14 on page no.142)

With reference to emerging trends in saris the vocabulary, the type and level of engagement with sari were varying for all the respondent groups hence quantitative comparison was thought-provoking and photographic references were provided to maintain objectivity. Each group had indicated their preference for the type of sari look for various activities and combined preference is shown in **Model 3: Trend prediction for type of sari for various looks.**

Model 3: Trend mapping for type of sari for various looks

Assessment of results for the future of the sari by all three groups, expert panelist and the case study data indicated that sari would continue to be an integral part of the Indian women's wardrobe. The interpretations could be many; traditional and fusion style, pre-pleated and partywear looks, the panelist however were not in favor of the cut and sew sari. There was neutral response to the "Neo-Sari" by the experts and women however the men gave no preference to the neo sari look. Thus the semiotic interpretations of the sari for future trend predictions are likely to be complex yet at the same time exploratory with the changing concepts of self-image for women and the lifestyle factors.

4.5.5. Analysis of the semiotics and interpretation of the Indian fashion system

The panel unanimously agreed that Innovation in the sari design had been helpful in reaching out to a larger population of women. “The Neo Sari” variants like “the Divided trouser sari”, “Sarini” (bikini sari), “Sarong sari”, and “Gown sari” were not an assault on Indian sartorial aesthetics and they can co-exist and the average response was 3- neutral on a 5 point scale by the middle and upper income group women and lower income group women as well as men. Chisti mentioned that there should be no “should” in dress, as garment or dress is never a moral question; it was something that one felt comfortable in, that you felt yourself in. Bhamini also welcomed the new sari versions and said that they may lure the youngsters to the sari and educating them about the cultural heritage, learning about own culture and also learning to compare cultures would bring more acceptance.

Textile scholar, Rta Kapur Chisti opined that sari is something about identity, being traditional. It was a way of remembering where we came from and paying a tribute to a garment; which is conceived in 2 dimensions of warp and weft on the loom and worn in three dimensions as draped garment. It is an ingenious garment in a country which is 10 months warm and one or two months of good weather. What is ingenious is that it is capable, unlike the kimono of constant recreation and reinvention, it is not static. At the Sari School she teaches the basics of sari draping and 40- 50 minute audio visual on patterning of the woven sari, the pattern gives the weight to the sari borders and *pallu; pallus* and borders have a functional purpose. She said that the chiffon saris fly about so much, hence need a piping border at bottom and quoted an example of the Hermes’ chiffon sari. She also stated that the greatness of India was that people shared differences of world view and yet shared them with lightness and laugh together; which should be not lost.

On the topic of cultural acceptance Wendell brought a very pertinent perspective about Indian school education that hardly had Indian history, Indian sciences of *Ayurveda* and *yoga*, craft traditions etcetera, this needed to change for better awareness. The history of various saris needed to be taken into account, just speaking of the contemporary may not suffice and awareness at grass root level at home, school and media would be impactful. Bollywood’s influence on fashion styles is evident so

he said it could prove to be a game changer if Deepika Padukone (leading Bollywood actor) wore a handloom sari.

The response to reasons for continuation of the Indian sari being worn for almost 5000 years the maximum responses were (33.1%) for tradition, followed in the descending order by aesthetic appeal, national identity ,comfort, and only few for any other. (Refer Graph 4.14 on page no.103)

Response to the Indian women maintaining their identity without the sari only 14.1% gave a negative response, and there was divided response that they would be able to maintain their identity whereas equal number were unsure and hence chose to be neutral. The average score of 3-Neutral was given by respondents when asked to indicate the importance of being accepted in the Indian Sari. (1being least important and 5 being most important). (Refer Graph no 4.15 on page no.103)

The *Nivi* style sari drape represented modernism, post- modern avatar of the sari would be more revealing; a celebration of the wearer's body. There were many advantages of wearing the Indian sari, the highest score 4.7 for a. Individual style, 3.38 for c. Social acceptance, 3.08 for e. Versatile garment, 2.79 d. Same sari can be worn even when the body size changed and 2.68 for b. Allows to flaunt body curves .

The brides often were found to be unfamiliar to the fit and feel of the traditional costumes and adorned their designer bridal dresses only once or very rarely repeated it later in life. They were not used to carrying the heavy costume, drapes and jewelry. It was therefore accepted that the wedding dress has become a costume with the expansion of the Indian fashion system over the decades. The wedding dress simulated the strongest construct of the hyper reality that the new Indian women seek. (Refer Plate 4. 16 on page no.144)

One more very significant interpretation of the Indian Fashion System was via popular culture in terms of Mumbai Film Industry popularly known as Bollywood and the satellite television post the 90's when the movies came to every living room, before the cable TV one had to go to the cinema theaters to get the latest fashion updates or read filmy magazines. In a typical Bollywood film the mother played a pivotal role, the onscreen depiction has undergone many changes with time and role of women in society. Many yesteryears leading ladies were portraying the mother's

role on screen and have adapted the sari with immense grace and continue their sari love. Bollywood entertainers continued to be incomplete without the female protagonist – heroine (represented beauty, grace, romance), the mother (Drama and sacrifice), the vamp (Demanding Matriarch/ Scheming Seductress); and off course the glamour of dance and music was the responsibility of the screen goddesses. (Refer Plate 4.10 on page no.139)

Bhamini Subramaniam brought up the topic of titillation and cited the example of 80's bollywood film "*Sagar*" in which Dimple Kapadia draped in red hot chiffon sari, doing the needful in sensuous manner being clad in 6 yards of the sari, unlike the scantily clad women in Bollywood in 2016.

Bollywood continued to be one of the biggest fashion influencers in Indian fashion system. Despite the many success stories for women in every walk of life, a good number of Bollywood films ended up sexually objectifying women in the on screen portrayal. They were dressed scantily and the sari allowed to show as much as hide. The saris used for these item songs were often made of sheer fabrics, pre-stitched to avoid excess bulk fabric and also coming undone during vigorous dance moves. The debate about sexism and commodification of these emancipated girls was endless. (Refer Plate 4.9 on page no.138)

The sari was also a preferred red carpet dress for Indian celebrities who were filmmakers; star wives etcetera also wore the sari at special occasions. Many Indian celebrities were recognized as fashion icons were brand ambassadors of multi-national fashion brands. They have preferred sari as their dress for international red carpets, for its grace and standing out in the crowd of evening gowns worn by other celebrities and have received very good reviews from the fashion press. Many international celebrities like U.K. Prime minister Ms. Theresa May draped in a turquoise sari for awards ceremony of Asian women of achievement in London 2016. Pussycat Dolls have also worn the sari. (Refer Plate 4. 11 on page no.140)

Fashion designer and Social activist Shaina NC, advised the brides to be that sari was a natural option, as one could cut it, and make *lehenga* later, and endorses a sari over a *lehenga* which could be worn 2-3 times, while a sari could be reused in multiple ways and there was an added advantage to a sari; on special occasions it was the only







garment that made one look the best. She added that sari was by far the most sensuous garment in world and could make a thin girl look voluptuous and a fat woman look sensuous. Rather than limiting the sari as an Indian costume, it needed to be promoted to international platform where it was an option to a cocktail gown, a twisted sari, sari worn on leggings or *ghaghra or chudidhar* with bustier, double sari. Most importantly all Indians needed to promote the sari as a national costume and as an international option to couture dressing. It was very unfortunate that we waited for Jemima Khan, Liz Hurley, Sherry Blair, Zandra Rhodes to wear the sari and say wow!, when it was right here, where it belonged to us and , must be explored in its varied dimensions by every single Indian. She emphasized that the sari was an option to western gown, but a better option.

The Indian fashion System had wide variety of ensembles; however the sari held a revered position and noted designers like Sabyasachi Mukherjee, Gaurang Shah, Abraham and Thakore, Anavila Sindhu Mishra etcetera have given it their own interpretation to make it more relevant to the changing times. Even local beauty pageants included various sari drapes to bring out the exotic grace.

Towards the end of the focused group discussion Wendell said that its inappropriate to use “Indian Couture”, couture is French word and legacy, he emphasized that the western world has seven pieces of apparel to play with: skirt, frock, blouse, red carpet gown, trousers, cocktail dress, and evening gown. In India we have an emporium of clothes and textiles in each state, the expert panelist also quoted openness of sharing ideas and techniques across the world.

The 21st century Indians were globe-trotters and assimilated fashion acquisitions from their foreign tours along with their identity intact in indigenous dressing, which were given a postmodern uplift by home born designers. This fusion space that we are living is where the transition from the represented garment to real garment is making the Indian Fashion system so dynamic and interesting. The development of the model for the Indian fashion system has been critical for establishing the significance in the context of Non-western fashion systems. Sharing the scientific research findings in the model 4 on next 2 pages, comprising of 12 apparel categories; was most pertinent for the domain of fashion theory and practice. There was a unified agreement that sustaining cultural heritage of the sari and unfolding the new fashion interpretations in times to come would take us a long way and build a fascinating eco system for the sari traditions.

Model 4 : Model for Indian Fashion System Everyday wear and Occasion wear

Model for Indian Fashion System Everyday wear and Occasion wear								
Sr. no.	Apparel category	Sari	Bottom/ trousers	Tops	Skirts	Dress	Accessories	Footwear
1	Foundation garments		Bra, panty, slips, chemise, corset, thermal wear					
2	Ethnic outer garments		<i>Chudidhar, shalwars, straight trousers variations, leggings</i>	<i>Kurta, kurti & choli variations</i>	<i>Ghagra</i>	NA		<i>Chappals, jootis, sandals</i>
3	Over garments		Shawls, cardigans, sweaters, jackets, cape, poncho, <i>phiran</i> , trench coats, <i>sherwani</i> , raincoats				Umbrellas	Gumboots & snow boots
4	Semi formals/ smart business casuals		Full length jeans, cotton pants, jeggings	Formal shirts, tops, polo T-shirts, vest, jacket	Tailored skirts	Tailored day dresses	Scarves, handbag, laptop bag	Semi-formal sandals and shoes
5	Tough casualwear/ rugged outdoor		Denim jeans, cargo pants, overalls, dungrees, jeggings	T-shirt, casual tops, vests, denim jacket	Denim or sturdy cotton skirts	NA	Backpacks, sling bags, hats	Canvas/ sports shoes/ boots/ floaters
6	Casualwear/ leisurewear		Denim jeans, cotton pants, jeggings, cropped pants, shorts, jumpsuits, dungrees	T-shirt, casual tops, vests, <i>kurta, kurti</i> , shirts, vest, jacket	Trendy skirts	Tunics, day dresses, <i>kaftan</i>	Trendy handbags, caps & straw hats	Trendy Sandals, shoes, <i>chappals</i> , jootis, flip flops, floaters

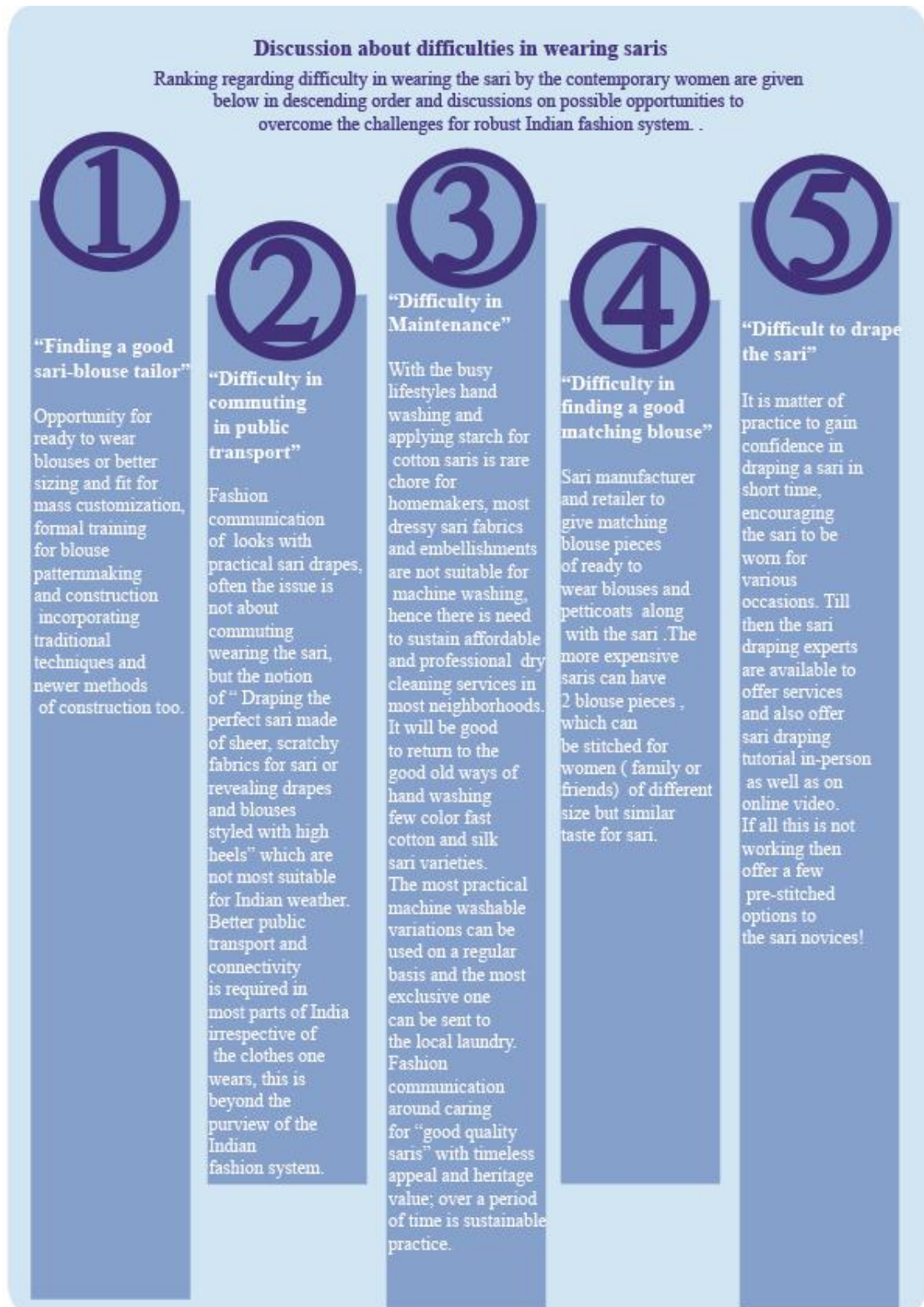
7	Workwear formals		Formal suits, trousers	Formal shirts, tops, polo T-shirts, vest, jackets	Tailored skirts	Tailored day dresses	Scarves, handbags, laptop bag	Formal sandals & shoes
8	Special Uniforms		Specific to each industry and company.					
9	Active casuals		Track pants, leggings, shorts	T-shirts, <i>ganjees</i> , sweatshirts	Very short skirts or shorts	Very short dresses for tennis/skating	Gear specific to each sporting activity	Sports shoes specific to each sporting activity
10	Semi formals		Full length jeans, cotton pants, jeggings	Formal shirts, tops, polo T-shirts, vest, jackets	Tailored skirts	Tailored day dresses	Scarves, handbags, laptop bag	Semi formal sandals & shoes
11	Evening formalwear		Dressy trousers	Dressy tops, corsets, jackets	Dressy skirts	Gowns, short dresses, tunics, <i>kaftans</i>	Clutches, <i>batwa</i> , costume jewellery, make up	Dressy heels
12	Festive/bridal		Dressy trousers	Bikini tops, corsets, <i>kurta</i> , <i>kurti</i> & <i>choli</i> variations, jackets	Crinoline <i>lahengas</i> , <i>ghagra</i>		Clutches, <i>batwa</i> , costume jewellery, make up	Dressy heels

The comparison of results from the three groups of respondents regarding the view on purpose of wearing the sari indicated that majority of men (43%) and Lower income group women (53%) gave first preference to “social acceptance”, whereas only

(14.1%) few women from Middle and Higher income group gave that preference, majority (57%) of these educated women indicated the reason as “ornamentation”. All three groups gave the least preference to “Modesty” as the purpose of wearing the sari. There was similarity in the order of preference between the Men and Middle and Higher income group women regarding reasons why the Indian sari has continued to be worn for almost 5000 years major reasons stated were “tradition”, “aesthetic appeal” and “comfort”, however the preference for “national identity” and “other reasons” were not in same order. There was specific quantitative data on the difficulties faced while wearing a sari, but at the same time substantial data was available to enumerate the advantages of wearing the sari. Thus there were opportunities for the Indian Fashion system to overcome the challenges faced for wearing the sari. (Refer Graph 4.16 on page no.104 & Refer Graph 4.19 and on page no.107)

Model 5 : Discussion about advantages in wearing sari.



Model 6 : Discussion about difficulty in wearing saris.

A detailed expression of findings for each phase of this study was formulated and inferred. The detailed analysis of the findings from the review of literature, focused group discussion, survey results from all there groups of respondents, the case studies and photographic interpretation to vigorous discussions for the major objectives of the study undertaken. The results have also led to insightful creation of models which summarize the key outcomes of study on semiotics of the Indian sari.