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### Enhancing apparels: An aesthetic appeal to fashion and clothing with intricate trimmings

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#### Abstract

Fashion and clothing have long served as an expressive medium, blending functionality with aesthetic appeal. Enhancing apparel through intricate trimmings offers a unique avenue for innovation and creativity in the fashion industry. Trimmings, such as embroidery, lace, beads, sequins, and appliqué, not only add depth and texture but also elevate the visual allure of garments, transforming them into wearable art. This approach embraces a balance between tradition and modernity, drawing inspiration from diverse cultures and design techniques to create captivating apparel. Out of so many trimmings available on the market, personally I am more fascinated by buttons. Especially the handmade embroidered button, using colorful threads (both cotton & silken), beads and zaris. Trimmings (Latkans & Buttons) add extra beauty to the clothing. These are the type of operative trimmings that are used as an integral part of garment. Trimmings such as zippers, draw cords, twill tapes, buttons, beads, and ribbons add unique visual elements to garments, making them more attractive to consumers. These embellishments can transform basic clothing into high-fashion pieces, which is particularly important in the competitive fashion industry. Apart from trimmings, using accessories in decorating clothing is another aspect to enhance the appeal of women's wear. Thus, this paper focuses on the essentials of Fashion & Textile materials required for industry to enhance the apparels. The research investigates traditional and contemporary uses of trimmings across various fashion segments, emphasizing their role in craftsmanship, design innovation, and sustainable practices. By analyzing case studies from couture and ethnic fashion, as well as ready-to-wear collections, the paper highlights how decorative details not only elevate clothing design but also preserve artisanal skills and heritage. The findings underscore the importance of integrating aesthetic elements with purpose and intention, ultimately suggesting that trimmings serve as a bridge between tradition and modernity in global fashion narratives.

**Keywords:** Accessories, clothing, embellishments, fashion, trimmings, & textiles

#### Introduction

Trimmings are said to be an integral part of clothing which also plays a vital role in plackets (extension & facing), where a button plays the major role. Hence the following paper will discuss the various categories and common characteristics of Trimmings, which has its own importance in the fashion industry, there are mainly two types of trimmings used in garments.

1. Decorative Trimmings.
2. Functional Trimmings.

The decorative trimmings consist of trims which enhance the garments are braids, laces, cords, appliques, embroidered borders and surface ornamentations. The functional trimmings are a fundamental part of the garment structure and serve specific purpose in the garment performance, their contribution to the garments is optional. Facing and piping are the two examples. The most attractive part of any dress is these intricate buttons, which are rarely seen and have no such kind of embroidered button done so far. Similarly, if we talk of other trims used in the accessories are obviously laces, zippers, patch works and many more that enhances some clothing. The trimmings should be designed, comfortable, safe, and durable. Before the Industrial Revolution, all trim was made and applied by hand, thus making heavily trimmed furnishings and garments expensive and high-status.

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Machine-woven trims and sewing machines put these dense trimmings within the reach of even modest dressmakers and home sewers, and an abundance of trimming is a characteristic of mid Victorian. Fashion. As a predictable reaction, high fashion came to be emphasized. Exquisiteness of cut and construction over denseness of trimming and applied trim became a signifier of mass-produced clothing by the 1930s. The iconic braid and gold button trim of the Chanel suit are a notable survival of trim in high fashion. While high-quality trimmings can increase production costs, they often justify a higher retail price. Consumers are typically willing to pay more for garments that offer superior aesthetics, functionality, and durability.

### Objectives for women's preferences and essentials for Trimmings

- Women's preferences for certain trimmings and some accessories can be influenced by current fashion trends. For example, if oversized bows or metallic details are in vogue, there will likely be an increased demand for garments featuring these elements.
- Preferences for trimmings can vary with seasons. In winter, women might prefer garments with fur trims, heavy embellishments, and warm scarves, while summer may see a rise in lightweight, decorative details like lace and ribbons.
- While aesthetics is important, comfort is equally crucial. Women prefer these that do not compromise the comfort of the garment. Soft, non-irritating materials and well-placed embellishments are key factors.
- Women also consider the ease of care and maintenance of garments with intricate trimmings and fancy accessories items that are easy to clean and maintain without extensive special care are preferred.

### Research Methodology

This study is a qualitative research work, based on both primary and secondary data. It has been done with the help of market surveys, questions for shopkeepers, traditional clothing lovers, books, magazines, online articles, designers' creation, research work etc. The primary data has been collected from the shops of Kolkata, where the shopkeeper of Bhowanipur sells trimming at reasonable rates. The information was collected through a market survey. It was found that women bought various trims from a shop in Bhowanipur to enhance their clothing as an attachment of trim can change the appearance of the apparel.

### Review of Literature

Trimmings allow for a high degree of customization, catering to niche markets and individual preferences. Custom trimmings enable brands to offer personalized products, enhancing customer satisfaction and fostering a deeper connection with the consumer. The significance of this concept is, as we have seen most of the trimmings are easily available in the market then why would consumers buy handmade buttons or trimmings from a designer. Specifically, we have seen women using fancy buttons in most if we talk about enhancing trimmings in their clothing. Got data from a few fashion followers that handmade buttons have their own richness and ethnicity. It is hard work and every time a new concept must develop, which makes each and every button different from each other. Some of the buttons have fine embroidery on it which is a very tough task to do embroidery in a small area (Button diameter). This is unique in every way

as there are all various sizes of Embroidered Button originally made by hand, no machine work has been done. As these handmade buttons are not normally available in the market. Therefore, it is exceptional and distinctive. The market is flooded with trimmings of numerous sizes, shapes, styles, and colors (Anonymous, 2011) <sup>[2]</sup>. The laces, borders and tassels as decorative trimmings were the trimmings which were mainly used for formal female wears. Dhindsa (2009) <sup>[5]</sup> found that machine embroidery ornamented with beads and sequins separately was the highly prevalent embellishment technique. All trimmings are required to be safe, comfortable, and durable, compatible with the design and fabric and easily available or scheduled for production. The trimming was used for decoration or by utilizing many techniques for the development of attractive and saleable garments (Curteza *et al.*, 2009) <sup>[3]</sup>. From the very beginning of civilization, clothing has been recognized as one of the primary needs of mankind. Trimmings are an ornamental addition used on apparels and home furnishings (Anonymous, 2010) <sup>[1]</sup>.

### Methodology and Materials

The study adopts a qualitative-quantitative approach to evaluate the impact of trimmings on fashion design aesthetics and consumer perception. The methods include:

- **Descriptive Analysis:** Describing the types of trimmings, their characteristics, and their influence on fashion trends.
- **Case Studies:** Examining garments from designers, brands, or historical eras to understand how trimmings contribute to the aesthetic appeal.
- **Experimental Methods:** Designing sample garments with varying trimmings to observe their impact on visual appeal and consumer preference.

### Primary Data

- **Surveys:** Collect consumer preferences on garments with specific trimmings.
- **Interviews:** Consult fashion designers, garment manufacturers, and textile artists to understand trends and techniques.
- **Focus Groups:** Gather feedback from target consumer groups regarding garment designs, especially women.

### Secondary Data

- Literature reviews of books, journals, and articles related to fashion aesthetics, textile art, and trimmings.
- Analysis of runway shows, fashion catalogues, and fashion media to identify trends.

### Visual Analysis

Comparative analysis of garment designs (before and after incorporating trimmings) to study aesthetic enhancement.

### Tools and Techniques

- **Garment Construction:** Experimental design of clothing samples incorporating various trimmings such as lace, embroidery, ribbons, sequins, and buttons.
- **Aesthetic Evaluation:** Assessing visual appeal using design principles like balance, proportion, contrast, and emphasis.
- **Consumer Surveys:** Using Likert scale-based tools to measure consumer satisfaction and preferences.

### Some common descriptions of trimmings

**Buttons:** A little twist can give and enhance the beauty of the buttons which are handmade. This button is wrapped with the

same matching cloth on which it is sewed and very gracefully attached keeping the alignment in mind and the unique design and style of the final garment. The diameter and the distance between each button are measured. Before attaching the buttons and decorating it, the apparel must be kept in mind as per on which garment it has to be attached on. The enhancement of buttons completely depends on the quality of fabric by which the apparel is made of. The buttons and embellished hanging are purely manually done with original ideas and concept. Changing the entire looks of the ordinary buttons into extraordinary. If there is pastel color dress with no detailing, then an embroidered button can enhance the garment in a beautiful way. All the **BUTTONS** which have been shown in images and figures have their own beauty with embroidery done like Kantha, Mirror work, Herring bone, Beads work and so on.



**Fig 1:** Self-made decorative buttons



**Fig 2:** Self-made embroidered buttons.

**Zippers:** Zippers as trimmings play a multifaceted role in the garments and fashion industry, balancing functionality with aesthetics. It has been 166 years since the first zipper was invented by Eddie Howe. Zippers are highly functional, providing a quick and easy way to open and close garments. They are commonly used in items like jackets, jeans, skirts, and dresses. They offer secure closure, ensuring garments stay in place and provide a snug fit, which is especially important in active wear and outerwear. In design and aesthetics zippers can be a bold fashion statement. Visible zippers, especially those with unique designs, colors, or metallic finishes, can add a modern, edgy look to clothing. High-quality zippers are durable and can withstand frequent use, making them ideal for everyday wear and heavy-duty garments like work wear and outdoor apparel. They can add structural integrity to garments, helping to maintain shape and fit, especially in tailored clothing and fitted styles. In October 2018 the Design Evolution of the Zipper: A Patent Review was analyzed by the authors themselves. The finding showed that the zipper's design has evolved from the conventional type to the removable, roll able, adjustable, and currently, the inventions are moving towards designing an automatic slider or even a robotic zipper. This situation is aligned with our direction, mission, and vision to design and develop Cliff as an automatized zipper. (The Design Evolution of the Zipper: A Patent Review by Mohamad Zairi Baharom, Frank Delbressine, Loe Feijs and Marina Toeters October 2018)

**Draw cords and Twill Tapes:** Trimmings such as draw cords and twill tapes are important elements in the garments and fashion industry, serving both functional and decorative roles. By providing a customizable fit, draw cords enhance comfort,

especially in casual and sportswear. They allow garments to be adjusted around the waist, wrists, ankles, or hood for a snug or relaxed fit as needed. In active wear and outdoor gear, draw cords help secure the garment, preventing it from shifting during movement. This is essential for maintaining performance and protection. Twill tapes are often used to reinforce seams, hems, and edges of garments. They provide added strength and durability, preventing fraying and extending the life of the clothing. They add stability to areas prone to stretching, such as shoulder seams and waistbands. This helps garments maintain their shape and fit over time. Twill tapes are used for binding raw edges inside garments, giving a neat and professional finish. This is especially common in high-quality or tailored clothing. Twill tapes can be used decoratively on the exterior of garments. They can create stripes, borders, or other design elements, adding texture and visual interest. Available in various colors and patterns, twill tapes can complement or contrast with the main fabric, enhancing the overall design of the garment. Twill tapes come in different materials (cotton, polyester, blends) and widths for a wide range of applications from lightweight dresses to heavy-duty work wear. Besides clothing, twill tapes are used in accessories, home textiles, and even crafting. They can serve as drawstring casings, apron ties, and trim for bags or pillows.

#### Why do we need trimmings and accessories in clothing?

Trimmings and accessories play a vital role in clothing, serving both functional and aesthetic purposes. Aesthetic Appeal is important in Trimmings like lace, embroidery, and sequins add texture, color, and dimension to garments, making them visually striking and unique. Traditional trimmings, such as beadwork or motifs, often represent cultural heritage and storytelling. Artistic creativity in trimming provides designers with a medium to showcase innovation and artistry. Reinforcement: Elements like piping, binding, and tapes strengthen seams and edges, enhancing garment durability has a functional purpose. Accessories like belts, buckles, and zippers ensure better fitness and ease of wearing. Intricate trimmings and statement accessories often define or elevate contemporary fashion trends. Modern techniques, such as laser-cut designs and sustainable trimmings, keep clothing relevant and appealing. High-quality trimmings and accessories, such as fine jewels or metallic details, add a sense of luxury and symbolic value. Adding trimmings to older garments can refresh their appearance, reducing waste by up cycling. In essence, trimmings and accessories transform clothing from mere functionality to a blend of utility, expression, and art, enriching the overall experience of fashion. Grommets, reinforced eyelets, and rivets are garnished all over in chaotic and scattered arrangements (Apparel Resources 16-January 2014).

#### Types of Trimmings preferred by women consumers

Most of the women consumers prefer buying decorative trimmings to be ornamented into their clothing. While decorative trimmings are selected and applied to enhance the aesthetic appeal of a garment but are not essential to garment function and performance and have maximum scope of designing (Diamond and Diamond, 2008) [6]. A survey was done on the fondness of women for trimmings. The embroidery was used as embellishment by majority of consumers for female wears (80.5%) and for male wears preferably ethnic wear (44%) and 22% consumers also preferred embroidery for children wears. Trimmings were



preferred by a large majority of consumers (93%) for female wears followed by 60% consumers for children wears. Majority of consumers (93.3%) preferred ornamentation materials such as beads, sequins, and rhinestones as embellishment for female wears. This survey was done based on preferences of women consumer Made to measure or custom made. (Sharma and Rawat 2006) <sup>[12]</sup> found that surface enrichment with pipe work, bead work, patch work and applique were appreciated by the female respondents.



**Fig 3:** Handmade lucrative latkans self-made

#### Versatility in fashion and beyond

- **Economic Impact:** Trimmings represent a significant segment of the fashion industry, encompassing manufacturing, distribution, and retail. They contribute to the overall economy through the creation of jobs and revenue generation. The trimming industry itself is a substantial part of the global textile and fashion industry. It creates jobs and stimulates economic activity in various regions, from the production of raw materials to the final assembly of garments.
- **Sustainability and Innovation:** Trimmings offer opportunities for innovation and sustainability in fashion. Designers and manufacturers are exploring eco-friendly materials and techniques for creating trimmings, contributing to more sustainable practices within the industry. With the growing emphasis on sustainability, eco-friendly trimmings made from recycled or biodegradable materials are becoming increasingly important. Brands that focus on sustainability can attract environmentally conscious consumers, adding value to their garments.
- **Historical and Cultural Significance:** Trimmings often reflect historical and cultural influences. Certain trims may be associated with specific time periods, regions, or cultural traditions, adding depth and meaning to the design of a garment.

#### The Results

Clothing trimmings are one of the most important decorative parts of garments. Which depends on the type, color and design of the garments. Apart from decorative buttons, laces and other lucrative elements which enhance clothing are Latkans, means decorative or ornamental hangings. Today, most designers use variant trimmings to maintain the modern directions of fashion. The decorative latkans which are

handmade and customized for special clients, enriches their made to measure costumes. It has its own independent purpose. An analysis shows that the world class fashion designers are using various innovative trimmings. Their exquisite clothing includes innovative embroidery, patch work, laser cut works and many more. Designers pay special attention towards haut couture garments, where special attention is paid to the decorative elements and also the different techniques of finishing. Hence, each trimming has its own uniqueness and richness.



**Fig 4:** Embroidered trimmings used for hangings, self-made

#### Discussion

Trimmings are a vital component of the garment industry, significantly influencing the marketability, functionality, and perceived value of clothing. Their importance spans aesthetic enhancement, brand differentiation, and economic impact, making them indispensable in the global market. As trends evolve, the role of trimmings will continue to adapt, reflecting changes in consumer preferences and technological advancements. Trimmings are influenced by fashion trends. The demand for specific types of trimmings can fluctuate based on what is currently popular in fashion shows, magazines, and social media. Staying ahead of these trends can give manufacturers and designers a competitive edge. This enhancement allows for a high degree of customization, catering to niche markets and individual preferences. Custom trimmings enable brands to offer personalized products, enhancing customer satisfaction and fostering a deeper connection with the consumer. A physical data was collected from few customers of Clothing and Accessories store “MUSKANS” in Park Circus Kolkata about their fascination towards trimmings and accessories that they can use to enhance their clothing without spending much on heavy intricate expensive embroideries. Yes or no, the viewpoints of women customers accordingly.

**Table 1:** Distribution of respondents based on agreement level

SRN	Options	Respondents	Percentage
1	Agree	20	20%
2	Strongly Agree	25	25%
3	Neutral	45	45%
4	Disagree	10	10%
Constituting Whole		100	100%

#### Analysis

Says, yes, the women customers get the maximum benefits by spending less on embroideries and other surface

ornamentations and buying intricate trimmings and improving the value of their clothing, quality and attractiveness by simply attaching the trimmings to their garments.

### Findings

The findings underscore the importance of design intricacies in shaping fashion trends and contributing to the evolution of apparel aesthetics. This study advocates for the continued exploration of embellishments as a means of creating timeless and impactful garments that resonate with diverse audiences. Women's preferences for trimming in clothing are shaped by a combination of aesthetic appeal, functionality, brand perception, and current trends. They appreciate unique, personalized details that allow for self-expression, while also valuing practicality and comfort. Understanding these preferences helps designers and retailers create garments that resonate with women, enhancing both their appeal and market success.

### Conclusion

The study explores the influence of intricate trimmings on consumer perception, emphasizing their ability to redefine conventional fashion norms and foster individuality. Much has not been written on the trimming materials such as buttons. Here I have pointed out exclusively two major types of handmade trimmings, Latkans (hanging embroidered pom poms) & Buttons. Without these an ethnic wear for men and women is unfinished. The intricate embroidery (mirror work, feather stitch, kantha stitch or zardozi) on buttons are barely available in the sewing shops, therefore these significant sewn in small objects are mandatory for designer wear particularly for ethnics. More articles should be written on these important elements essential for garments. For a fresher designer working in the fashion industry, must have a knowledge and idea of attachment and fasteners which is necessary for garment creations. In essence, trimmings are more than just decorative accents; they are integral components of garment design and fashion culture, contributing to the overall creativity, functionality, and appeal of clothing. The figures and Table contain in this paper are original and self-made. No copy has been made from any of the sites and journals.

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