

Footwear as an imperative fashion ensemble

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ABSTRACT

Shoes are very significant in clothing and fashion industry. The selection of shoes indicates fashion level in women and the attention to detailing in a men's character. Even though most of us are aware that huge styles and brands are available it will be interesting to know the different styles of shoes available, top brands, the history of footwear and selection tips. This paper was drafted with compiling of all needed information when one thinks of footwear and fashion. It will be an eye opener for students and scholars to take up researches in this arena thinking on the importance of footwear in one's life and future with electronic and wearable technologies.

Key Words : Footwear, Shoes, Styles in shoes, Shopping shoes, History shoes

INTRODUCTION

Feet is one of the significant part of human body. It has 25% of all the bones in the human body. Wrong choice of foot covering can lead to various health ailments in short and long term. Footwear market on the other hand, is growing in an enormous rate with the increase in purchasing power and growing awareness on fashion and style through media and social networking [1]. Casual, party, formal, summer, winter are some of the basic styles. In sports, special shoes for yoga, gymnastics, running, power lifting, basketball, cricket, football and the list goes endless. It is observed that shoes are making a very prominent presence in one's life.

There is a saying, that one shoe can change your life. This was sarcastically related to the fairy tale of Cinderella. Wrong selection of footwear in terms of size of inappropriateness can leave an unforgettable experience. It is so commonly seen among fashion models falling off the ramp due to an ill fitted or a hi-fashion shoe. Considering the crave to be fashionable and the awareness on right methods to select and the huge options available, there seems to be a gap which is intended to be filled by this paper.

History :

One can imagine shoes were first made from animal skin, that was leftover after taming them for meat. This was used to cover the feet to aid long distance walking and to prevent from extreme climatic conditions. The skin called as hide was tied to the feet by means of another strip cut from the original and wound around holding the feet and skin together. Later when needles made from bones were designed, the strip of skin was twined in the needle and wrapped up (Fig. 1) [2-3].



Fig. 1 : Shoe from animal skin, Papyrus plant, textiles made from it and Egyptian Priest

It is believed that 40,000 years ago footwear was made from animal skins and wood. Ten thousand years before the term ‘sandals’ was framed that was used both in winter and summer. It was noted that the most beautiful slippers were made by the Egyptians using the Palm and Papyrus leaves. It was said to be one of the significant accessory used by the Egyptian priests (Fig. 1).

In the middle ages all class of people started wearing slippers. In the 15th century men started wearing heels. It was strange to imagine that the fashion of wearing heels, the very popular feminine accessory was actually invented and used by men. The purpose was to increase the height of the soldier in the war ground, so that he can see the enemies far behind and fight more effectively. Later men started popularising heels to increase their height in comparison to their female counterparts to portray a sign of a higher level enduring more protection and safety envisioned through their tall look. Human feet is different in the left and right. It was also strange to know that for a very long time (till 19th century) there were no separate right and left shoes. One shoe for both feet only was made in the mass production. To accommodate both legs the shoes were designed narrow. Consumer should buy the shoe, walk with it and then get the shoe modified to fit the foot properly [3-4].



Fig. 2: Shoes during the Renaissance period

Beginning of 17th century buckles, the major accessory of the shoe was invented. It was found in various raw materials like brass, silver and steel. Now, the current scenario there are no rules of how a shoe can look. One will be very terrified to surf the net and see the craziest inventions made on shoes, which are even believed to be fatal. From the basics like the flip flop to the silhouette, the range of styles in shoes are innumerable [5].

Types of Footwear :***Gladiators :***

It would be fascinating that the style of footwear once used by the Greek soldiers have now become a major trend in women's footwear category. Gladiators have a very simple design of a flat base and long rope that is tied around the calf. The semi-exposure of the foot makes it extremely glamorous. In the recent times, pointed heels along with cut work fabric, braided strings, tassels and bon-bons are used in order to make the gladiators more elegant.

**Fig. 3 : Gladiators*****Chelsa boots :***

In the 19th century boots originated in Chelsa, England. The designer for Queen Victoria, designed a unique footwear for the Queen that later became very fashionable among the peers and public. This style of shoe ends at the ankle. Iconic feature is the elastic in the shoe that makes it easy to insert and remove the leg. The loop in the backside of the shoe was also an appreciative design, that was designed for the same purpose of ease in comfort [6].

**Fig. 4 : Chelsa boots*****Ballerina :***

As the name suggests, the shoes designed and used by the ballet dancers are very feminine and elegant. The trends of 2017-18 had this category of shoe due to its versatility for every body-type and occasion. The characteristic feature is the round edges, roll-able (flexible), flat heel, simple look and extremely comfortable to wear properties. Animals prints, glitters and bright single solid tones were popular in the recent past.



Fig. 5: Ballerina

Boots :

Shoes normal have holes (lace hole) and covers the base of foot. The dust, dirt and soggy water walk will be impossible. Thus footwear styles that covers the foot completely till the ankle and sometimes even up till knees was essential. Boots got a recognition here. The fashionable look with boot can be viewed through the iconic cow-boy Americans look. One can observe the nature of activity among muddy waters and desert ride and the role of boots. The variation of these boots is available with the covering extended till the hip. Another look adopted is women wearing mini-skirts and boots. Difference in heel size, material used and styles in opening the boots are seen as part of boots fashion [6].



Fig. 6: Boots

Boots are usually made from a single piece of leather or rubber. The boots used by American cow boy is usually heeled, that is strong to kick the horse and initiate the riding. No trims like laces are seen in this style. These are also called as the cowboy or riding boots. Galoshes are boots that are made from plastic or a water-resistant material, that is worn over a shoe to prevent the footwear worn inside.



Fig. 7: Galoshes and Ski boots

Ski boots is another variation that enables the wearer to walk in the snowy mountains. The games in snow have basically the boot type pattern in order to give warmth and protection to the wearer [7-10].

Clog :

The working-class people, mine workers and farmers need a special kind of boots that will be strong and stand the wear and tear of harsh conditions. The important function is here is to protect the wearers foot. Wood is the chosen material to make these shoes. The sole is made of wood and the top foot covering is made of leather. Slip on clogs are made using elastic on the sides to enable easy wearing [11].



Fig. 8 : Clog

Lace up :

As the name suggests, lace is used to cover the feet. The shoes iconic style if the low-cut vamp. These shoes are limited till ankle.

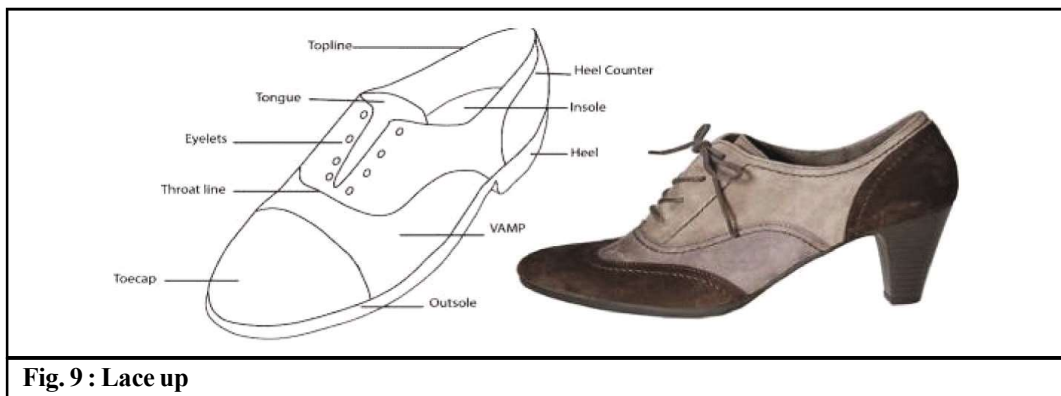


Fig. 9 : Lace up

Moccasin :

These shoes are native to Norway. It is generally made using a single piece of hide. No tongue or lace is seen in this style. It is also soft, flat and comfortable shoe. Thongs are an essential accessory found in moccasins. The important feature is that these shoes never make noise while walking. Embroidery is sometimes done on the top of the shoes.



Loafers :

Moccasins with heels are called loafers. This is used by both men and women. In a shopping mall, loafers are the most displayed and sought-after shoe category [12].



Mules :

The look of mule can be seen by resemblance of this is close to backless shoe or slipper. This is worn by females and a choice of footwear for any age group. This can be seen with closed toe and with or without heels.



Sandals :

Shoes that are flat made of leather and tied using long thongs are called sandals. The difference in style can be achieved by variations of design and embellishment in the thongs. The tying can be done till ankle or knee level. These open shoes semi-exposing of the legs and make the feet look more beautiful [13].



Fig. 13 : Sandals

Flip flop :

The Hawaii slipper is flat and available in variety of designs and colours. The name flip flop is derived from sound it creates while walking. The V strap pass between thumb and toe. Leather, plastic and rubber are the common raw materials used in making these shoes. In Australia these are called thongs, Jandals in New Zealand and Slippers in Hawaii islands. Flip flop is both fashionable and comfortable., commonly referred as poor man’s footwear [14-16].



Fig. 14 : Flip flop

Monks :

These are shoes with low cut vamp. Buckle and strap are the common feature in monks. The common example is school shoes.



Fig. 15 : Monks

Conclusion :

Footwear has a forty-thousand-year history in being a fashion accessory serving toddler to the old age, from casual wear to a foot accessory for a royal wedding. Footwear is the connection between oneself and mother earth, and choosing it wisely is a must. Everyone in this world has at

least two pairs of shoes, and purchase at least 40 pair in their lifetime. A survey unveils a fact that women on an average have five pair of shoes [15-16]. The basic knowledge on the different names of footwear and their history was unknown to masses, and this paper is expected to create some awareness. This can motivate fashion designers to design innovative styles for their dresses.

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