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PAPER

Which is more Feminine - the 'Sari' or the 'Evening Dress'?

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Clothing has become a symbolic code to recognize humans as particular kinds of individuals. In all societies the body is 'dressed', and everywhere dress and adornment play symbolic, communicative and aesthetic roles. Tension regarding the dress and female body oscillates between modern feminism and cultural allegiances. The women, dress and feminism always change according to the lifestyle and attitudes in contemporary world. In the western world over the years the evening dress has become an iconic piece of clothing. Non-western dress, in global culture is progressively more appropriated by western fashion. The 'sari' is sensual and flattering female attire in South Asia and now travels the globe as 'fashion'.

The paper mainly discusses 'Evening Dress' and the 'Sari', sexual factors in 'Sari' and 'Dress', 21st century women and the 'Sari' and generational changes through feminism. The aim of the paper is to identify the most feminine attire for women between the 'Sari' and the 'Evening Dress'. Data has been analyzed quantitatively using participants' preference as 'wearer' and 'qualitatively' using participants' feedback as viewer. The survey was completed by using 100 'MA Fashion Design and Technology' students at London College of Fashion, University of the Arts, London.

After the intervention it was found that 32% percent agreed that the sari is more feminine, another 33% agreed evening dress is more feminine than the 'sari' and the rest, 35% agreed with both. So the survey suggested that feelings about wearing a dress depend on the wearer's sense of the dress and the viewer's points of view of the wearer. The study shows that, the positive or negative feeling of wearing a dress, depends on the wearer's sense of the dress and her awareness of its effect on others.