

Skill Gaps in Fashion Designing Industry: A Quantitative Investigation of Issues and Challenges

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Abstract

The world of fashion design is extremely active and competitive, and it is continuously changing with new trends and fashions. The industry, which is renowned for its glitz, originality, and invention, is essential to forming the culture and identity of our society. The fashion design industry does, however, suffer a number of problems and obstacles, including a lack of talent. The discrepancy between the workforce's skill set and the industry's skill set is known as a skill gap. Skill gaps are common in the design, production, marketing, and management sectors of the fashion designing industry. Many designers and professionals enter the business without any official schooling or training, which makes it challenging for them to stay abreast of the most recent trends and methodologies. The competitiveness and expansion of the sector are also hampered by skill deficiencies. The market needs qualified experts who can innovate, invent, and adapt to the shifting market demands as a result of the increase in worldwide competitiveness. To ensure the fashion designing industry's viability and expansion, it is crucial to solve the skills gap within it. The research has considered respondents from fashion designing industry to know the skill gap in fashion designing industry, it is found that Lack of information and abilities is a major cause of skill gap in fashion industry, Lack of market knowledge and demand is a challenge for fashion industry, Creativity above technical proficiency is another reason of skill gap.

Keywords: Fashion design industry, Skill gap, Competitiveness, Qualified experts, Viability.

Introduction

The shifting customer needs, technical improvements, and globalization have all contributed to recent rapid changes in the fashion sector. As a result, for the sector to remain competitive, a staff with the requisite capabilities is needed. Yet, one of the causes of the skill shortages in the fashion business is the out-of-date course material for fashion design programmes. The

curriculum must be updated and pertinent to the demands of the sector at this time. In order to keep up with the changing needs of the industry, the curriculum must be updated on a regular basis. In order to ensure that graduates have the skills needed to work in the sector, the curriculum should contain courses on new technologies, sustainable fashion practices, and developing fashion trends (Rajamanoharane and Santhanalakshmi 2007).

Examining the Skill Gap in Fashion Education" offers insightful information about the skill shortages in the fashion designing sector. It makes the case that the lack of current and pertinent education and training programmes is the main cause of the talent gap in the sector. The fast-paced and constantly-changing nature of the fashion industry is not sufficiently addressed in fashion education programmes. Several fashion design programmes curricula are frequently out-of-date and do not reflect the most recent trends and technological breakthroughs in the field.

Skill gaps may come from a lack of information and abilities needed to fulfill market needs. The necessity of technical skills like pattern cutting and garment manufacturing is frequently overlooked due to the industry's emphasis on creativity and innovation. This preference for aesthetics and creativity above technical proficiency could be a factor in the industry's skill gaps in production and manufacturing (Allsop 2017).

There are more than simply technical design talents that are lacking in the fashion designing sector. He contends that in order to succeed, designers must have a comprehensive awareness of the sector, as well as business management, marketing, and branding skills. It emphasises how important it is for designers to comprehend consumer needs, build a brand, manage the production process, and collaborate with many stakeholders. Given the international nature of the fashion industry, designers must have a worldwide perspective. The cultural and sociological distinctions across various locations must be understood by designers, who must then modify their designs accordingly. To work well with coworkers and stakeholders from various backgrounds, designers must have good communication and cooperation abilities (Sapto 2013).

Literature Review

Employers are very concerned about skill gaps in the fashion design sector. Gehlhar 2008 emphasises the value of possessing a diverse set of abilities, including not only design abilities

but also technical and business abilities. She contends that in order to produce effective items, fashion designers must be able to work cooperatively with other experts, including producers, marketers, and merchants. As a result, production and management skill mismatches may have a negative effect on the competitiveness and expansion of the sector. the significance of keeping abreast on market developments and technologies. Additionally, it highlights the fact that designers must be aware and adaptable in order to stay relevant in a sector that is continuously changing. To do this, one must be eager to pick up new knowledge, abilities, and methods while also having a grasp of current affairs. The fashion design industry's skill gaps are consistent with the general industry belief that, in order to succeed, designers must possess a wide variety of abilities and knowledge outside of design. Professionals must be dedicated to ongoing learning and skill development in order to close these skill gaps, which will be essential for the industry's growth and competitiveness.

Lack of options for workforce training is another aspect that can be causing the skill gaps. For the sake of their staff members' talents, fashion companies must fund training initiatives. This will contribute to closing the skill gap and raising the level of workforce quality (Srivastava & Kishore, 2005). The sector should put additional emphasis on enhancing the capabilities of the current personnel. The skill gap may be closed by continued training and workforce upskilling. By doing this, it will be ensured that the workforce possesses the necessary capabilities to satisfy the sector's shifting expectations (Tandon & Gupta, 2003).

Fashion as Communication, a book by Barnard published in 2016, emphasizes the significance of comprehending fashion as a type of communication that communicates social and cultural meaning. This underscores how important it is for designers in the field of fashion to have a thorough awareness of the social and cultural settings in which their work will be seen. This entails being aware of the target market's wide range of viewpoints, likes, and preferences as well as the design's potential social and cultural repercussions. In order to properly transmit their ideas and work with other professionals, such as producers, marketers, and merchants, designers must possess strong communication skills, which are also emphasised in the book. Hence, a lack of skills in areas like communication and cultural awareness might hinder the competitiveness and development of the company. It highlights the significance of a multidisciplinary approach

to fashion design that blends design abilities with cultural knowledge, communication, and teamwork skills.

Conducting Social Research, Baker's 2018 publication, emphasizes the significance of doing research to pinpoint skill gaps and gauge the efficacy of training initiatives. This emphasizes the necessity for employers and educators to carry out research to ascertain the industry's training needs and skills gaps in the context of fashion design. The development of training programmes that effectively close skill gaps and satisfy industry demands can be aided by the research. In order to stay up with the shifting trends and demands of the industry, the book also stresses the significance of continual training and development for designers. This emphasises the necessity for designers to pursue lifelong learning in order to maintain their competitiveness and relevance in the field. Views generally highlight the significance of using evidence-based strategies to close skill gaps in the fashion designing sector and the necessity of continual training and development to keep up with the sector's changing needs.

Collaboration between the fashion industry and educational institutions is necessary to keep the curriculum current and applicable to the demands of the sector. This will make it possible to guarantee that the graduates have the abilities needed for the field. Workforce training possibilities may also result from industry and academic cooperation (Sengupta & Jyoti, 2004). The fashion industry's globalization has also widened the talent gap. Companies must compete with international players because the industry is no longer confined to a specific geographic area. As a result, there is now a requirement for a competent workforce to meet the demands of the global market (Sahney & Banerjee, 2006).

According to Pandya and Desai (2003), the fashion industry needs to concentrate on creating a culture of lifelong learning. The worker must be flexible and willing to pick up new skills given the industry's constant changes. This will ensure that the sector can remain competitive and fulfil the shifting consumer demands.

The Economics of Small Company Finance by Berger and Udell from 2018 focuses on how private equity and debt markets affect small enterprises' financial success. This emphasises the

value of financial access for designers and small fashion enterprises to invest in their competencies in the context of the fashion designing sector. This covers funding for education and training initiatives that can fill skill gaps and raise the level of industry competition. In order to maintain the viability and expansion of small firms, the essay also underlines the significance of proper financial management. This demonstrates the necessity for designers to possess a wide variety of competencies, including financial management skills, in order to manage their enterprises and obtain finance. Views as a whole emphasise the significance of having access to capital and having sound money management techniques for filling talent gaps in the fashion designing business and fostering its expansion and sustainability.

Objective:

To know the Skill Gaps in Fashion Designing Industry.

Methodology:

The researcher had considered people from fashion industry to know the Skill Gaps in Fashion Designing Industry. The survey was conducted with the help of a questionnaire. The researcher had collected the primary data through random sampling method and was analysed by statistical tool called mean.

Findings**Table 1 Skill Gaps and challenges in Fashion Designing Industry**

S. No.	Statements	Mean Value
1.	Lack of information and abilities is a major cause of skill gap in fashion industry	4.13
2.	Creativity above technical proficiency is another reason of skill gap	4.00
3.	Lack of workforce training is also a cause of skill gaps	3.07
4.	Lack of creativity lead to skill gap and unable to meet the demand of market	3.11
5.	Lack of market knowledge and demand is a challenge for fashion industry	4.07
6.	Lack of technology and experienced designers is another challenge for fashion industry	3.19

Table 1 shows the Skill Gaps in Fashion Designing Industry. The respondent says that Lack of information and abilities is a major cause of skill gap in fashion industry with mean value 4.13, Lack of market knowledge and demand is a challenge for fashion industry with mean value 4.07 and Creativity above technical proficiency is another reason of skill gap with mean value 4.00. The respondent also says that Lack of technology and experienced designers is another challenge for fashion industry with mean value 3.19, Lack of creativity lead to skill gap and unable to meet the demand of market with mean value 3.11 and Lack of workforce training is also a cause of skill gaps with mean value 3.07. Figure 1 shows the mean values at glance:

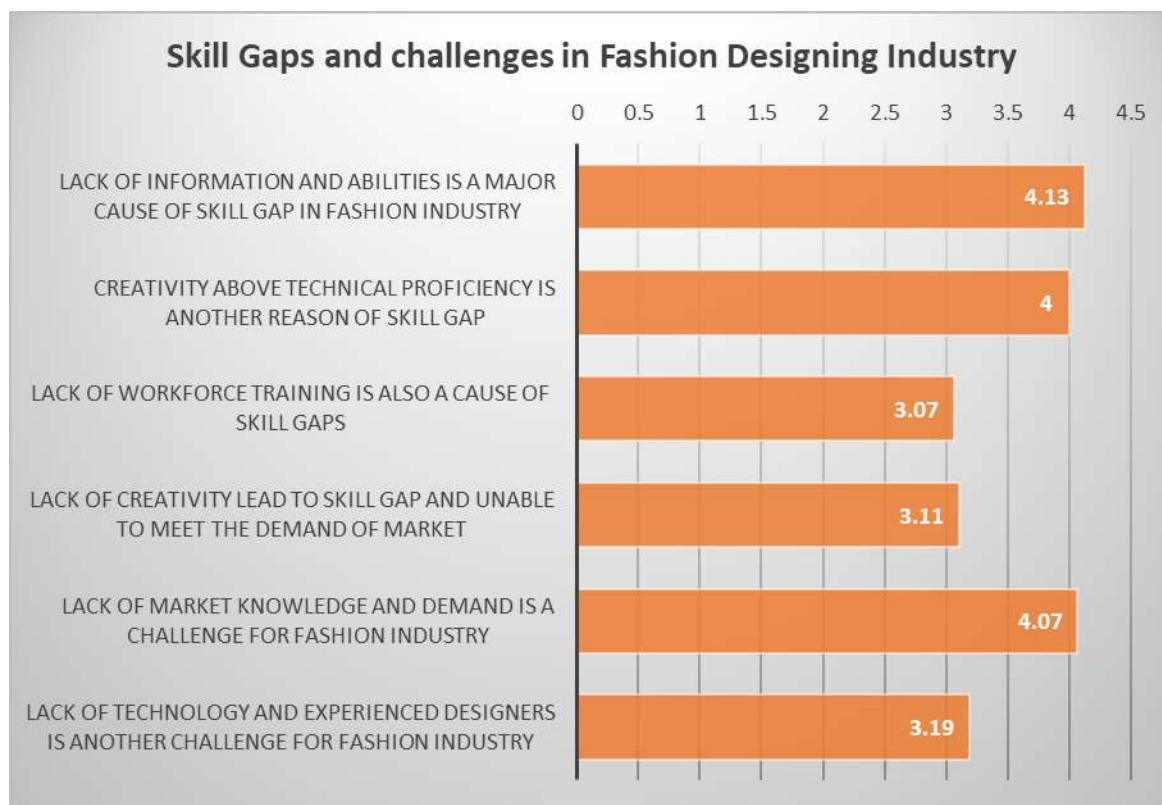


Figure 1 Skill Gaps and Challenges in Fashion Designing Industry

Conclusion:

The sector of fashion design is one that is continuously changing, thus experts in it must stay current with emerging styles and technologies. Due to a lack of trained specialists and the growing need for experienced designers, the sector is suffering from a lack of talent. Lack of

proper training facilities, educational opportunities, and financing for R&D all contribute to this disparity widening even further. The growth, sustainability, and competitiveness of the fashion designing industry are significantly impacted by the skill gaps in the field. Due to their inability to stay up with the industry's rapid advancement, designers with dated knowledge and abilities produce items that are of inferior quality and have static designs. In addition to harming the industry's reputation, this also makes it more difficult for it to compete on a worldwide scale.

Stakeholders in the sector must cooperate to fund training programmes, advance R&D, and aid in educational programmes in order to overcome these problems and obstacles. To support up-and-coming designers, this involves granting them access to cutting-edge tools and technology, mentorship programmes, and financial resources. In conclusion, there are considerable obstacles to the expansion and sustainability of the fashion designing sector. Industry stakeholders, including designers, educators, legislators, and investors, must work together to address these difficulties. With the correct investments and assistance, the sector may overcome these obstacles and maintain its competitiveness in the global market while generating job opportunities for young designers.

This study was conducted to know the skill gap in fashion designing industry, it is found that Lack of information and abilities is a major cause of skill gap in fashion industry, Lack of market knowledge and demand is a challenge for fashion industry, Creativity above technical proficiency is another reason of skill gap.

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