Impact on the Acceptance of the People

By

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Abstract

The Shalwar is defined as\(^1\) a pair of light, loose, pleated trousers, usually tapering to a tight fit around the ankles, worn by women from South Asia typically with a kameez (the two together being a salwar kameez). \(^2\)A shalwar is wide at the waistband and narrow at the bottom, it is usually held in place with an elastic band or a belt. Many innovations have been made in the shalwar design till date. There are many different types of shalwar e.g.: Patiala shalwar, dhoti shalwar, Parallel shalwar etc.

The research undertaken investigates into the “impact of the changing trends on the shalwar; are these negative or positive”. Most people from universities believe that the change in the shalwar is positive and the impact on the garment doesn’t make a difference as long as it is a fashion statement and some people believe that the impact of the changing trends have made the shalwar lose its identity and this change is negative. Women from different areas such as housewives and young women state that they would wear anything which is in fashion. The designers have their own way of expressing on this topic.

The changes that the shalwar has gone through should be brought to light as the impact of these changes on the garment is both negative and positive. People have accepted and rejected this change just for the comfort level or as a fashion statement. People need to know the importance of this garment and how it represents us. They need to know how this can be made fashion.

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\(^1\) [http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/salwar?view=uk](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/salwar?view=uk)

\(^2\) [http://www.indianwomensclothing.com](http://www.indianwomensclothing.com)
Introduction

“The Shalwar”

The Shalwar is defined as “a pair of light, loose, pleated trousers, usually tapering to a tight fit around the ankles, worn by women from South Asia typically with a kameez”.

The focus of this research document is based on ‘the impact on the acceptance of the people on the changing trends of the Shalwar’. Is this impact negative or positive on the garment? Have those changes made the shalwar lose its identity or not. It is important to understand whether or not the shalwar has lost its identity because of its importance in the tradition and cultural heritage.

The purpose of this research is to find out how the Shalwar has evolved over the period of time and how many people have accepted or rejected the changes in this garment. Why have some people accepted this change while others haven’t, do they believe it to be a religious or a social norm or is there another reason behind it.

It will further discuss in detail the age group of the people who accepted this change. The impact on various people from different social and economic backgrounds and their acceptance of this change.

The Introduction chapter gives a brief overview of the encountered research. An introduction to the shalwar and the reason to why this research is being done.

The Literature Review will discuss the articles and books which were used in the research process. What has been already established and accepted and thus identifying the key factors that

\[3\] http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/salwar?view=uk
will be brought to light with this dissertation. It will comprise of the following sub division the origin of the shalwar and its types.

**The Research Methodology** chapter showcases a detailed structure of how this research was conducted. From the types of questionnaires to the approach that was undertaken for this research. owing to its nature, it explains all.

**The Findings and Discussions** will comprise of the argument weather people accept or reject this change, which are these people, their age group and if they have rejected the change what are the reasons behind it is. It will further discuss the garments identity, changes and the effect both on people and the garment.

**The Conclusion** chapter of the dissertation notices what the impact of the changing trends on the shalwar were since it was there till today. How people have reacted towards this change have they accepted or rejected this change. Does it have a negative or positive effect on garment on its own. It will give a concluded analysis on the above mentioned questions.

**Appendices** this chapter contains transcribed interviews to make the dissertation easier to understand

In a nutshell, the study at the end of the day the dissertation aims to find out the acceptance or rejection by the people of the changes the shalwar has gone through and the reaction of the garment towards this change has it evolved to an extend that it is going extinct or is it still there and just needs to be brought back into the market.


**Literature Review**

**Origin:**

4 “Amidst its royal grandeur, enigmatic feel and feminine charm shalwar breathes the sighs of history. With its roots deeply seated in the antiquities of medieval India and Persia, the origin of Shalwar still carries the rich sartorial chronicle amidst its fall, stitch, luster and feel. The general habit of the Iranian and Turkish people were putting in baggy trousers whilst drawing it tight with strings. Research says that this pattern was indeed the progenitor of today's shalwar. Thus this era actually states the origin of shalwar”.

5 “Not only in Central Asia, has origin of shalwar unveiled the fact that, even the court nobles of the Qajar and Ottoman dynasty preserved shalwar as part of their court attire.” However in India Shalwar was introduced mostly by the Muslim people there, in the 12th century. In the end the credit goes to the Mughal dynasty to keep the traditional shalwar. “The tale of ethnicity, which originated in India with the Mughals later, gained a remarkable dimension with the popularity of the attire.” The shalwar was basically initiated as the costumes for Mughal courtrooms because of its gracefulness and femininity. Later the different type of styles and designs became a part of the shalwar this included the use of different material and patterns to make it sellable in the market today. Then in a lot of areas of Pakistan, people were also influenced by the different styles of shalwars and so they adopted it.

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5 Tale of Ethnicity, Retold in Fabric, http://www.articlesbase.com
**Types:**

6. “Like all garments the shalwar has also evolved and transformed over time to suit the current day demand of the modern women yet it stays elegant and comfortable. With changing time and fashion the shalwar was changed by altering the shape size details of belt, leg facing and the gathers by adding or subtracting them”. There is a basic type which is called the shalwar; it usually has a frill at the front or from side to center. Patiala shalwar is another type these have frills all over the hip area to create volume. The haram pants is also another it is very similar to the Patiala shalwar in terms of the frill on the hip area but the difference is that the leg face is made to have a elastic or gathers to make narrow from the bottom. Parallel pants have also been taken neither from the shalwar this is made in a straight cut with no frills or gathers nor to the hip area neither at the leg facing.

An article called “Save the Shalwar” in the Express Tribune (Feb 28, 2011) by Farzeela Faisal talks about how once the summer starts the lawn bill boards makes one go crazy with models posing in pants, capri’s and churidars what they don’t wear and what we don’t see very often now is the shalwar, the shalwar which was once known to be a cultural icon has now disappeared. The article further discusses how the fashion designers call it the shalwar kameez yet it really isn’t because they have very conveniently replaced the shalwar with pants and similar garments like that. The author claims “**Designers have not given the national dress the prestige it deserves.**” She believes that women completely rely on the designers and this loss is happening due to westernization there is a comparison with other cultures to how saris remain

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6 *Salwar Kameez: From the Royal Mughal courts to the Fashion Runway* by Azmy
popular for the Indians even though they do wear western clothes. The Arabs wear their maxis in forms of abayas the Malay women are very comfortable in wearing silk wrappers and scarf’s to cover their hair but no matter how multicultural they get they still don’t exploit their culture.

This is to say, that this author believes that the changing trends in a shalwar, for example, Capri and pants do not do justice to the shalwars and that it is not a form of a shalwar. She says that the impact of the changing trends is due to westernization and the shalwar has been disregarded as our cultural icon.

According to another article “Pakistan: look who’s wearing pants” in the Women’s feature service (Feb 1, 2010) by Ebrahim, Zofeen T discusses how people say women don’t experiment with fashion he disagrees with the statement because a very visible example is the shalwar which once used to be a very essential part of the eastern women’s dress which now is completely rejected by the urban working women. He talks about how the shalwar has been replaced by the more westernized trousers, pants, izzars and culottes. These women have relegated their shalwars deep down in some corner of their closets. In the article women from different age groups have been interviewed and asked why they have replaced their cultural shalwar with western garments. A thirty year old TV anchor from a private channel claims that she like the pants, trousers and culottes because they make her look thinner and are easy to manage. A Lahore based morning show host on express 24/7 Huma Shah claims that she has accepted the trousers, pants etc but nothing can lessen her love for the shalwar and she doesn’t plan to get rid of them either. On the other hand, she acknowledges that she has accepted the trousers because they make you look thin and add height she also adds that they are less of a hassle in terms of ironing. Sadia Umer and Sobia both colleagues at a non government firm claim that they like the pants because of its snug fit and believe that long shirts look better on
pants rather than the baggy shalwar. A journalist from ‘Dawn’ says that pants are less fussy than the shalwar and it is very flexible. Pants give one a chance for individuality as everyone wears their own length, now it depends on one for being reveling or covered. The article also talks to designers and take their views on what they believe to where the garment is going. The famous Rizwan Beyg doesn’t think that the shalwar is going anywhere or its going to go out of fashion at all. He claims “I don't think 'shalwar' has gone; the catwalk is full of it in its variations”. He believes that shalwar is a very important part of the Pakistani women attire. He predicts that by the end of the year shalwars will make a comeback and it can never vanish he also says “It's just a phase of experimentation and soon people will get their fill of the culottes and the 'izzars' and will return to the old faithful 'shalwar'...it's very much part of being a Pakistani”.

Whereas, Umer Sayeed also a very big fashion designer doesn’t agree with Rizwan he says that the true classical form of shalwar shouldn’t have gone through the variations as those kill the originality he says “I hate all variations of 'shalwars'”. Traditional fashion loyalist share Umer’s idea. A Karachi based event manager Shabana Abdullah also thinks that a shalwar defines the female beauty and nothing can replace that. Some women think that the changes in the shalwar have occurred due to modernization women have stopped wearing the shalwar kameez because they don’t want to wear the dupatta and without that the dress looks incomplete. Some state that they preferably wear it in places where pants and Kutras aren’t appropriate and they don’t want to attract unwanted attention. The article also interviews a regular tailor to see how he has adopted the change. The tailor who has an experience of 35 years is happy with this change and believes now, he has varieties to stitch. It concludes that trends and traditions are going hand in hand.
In this article many people have different views. The general public had different views and Rizwan Beyg being a designer has different view compared to another designer, Umer Sayeed. Some people said that the changing trends of a shalwar has made it easier and comfortable for them to work in the environment, whereas, Shabana Abdullah believes that nothing can replace the shalwar. Umer Sayeed, the designer also does not accept the variations of the shalwar, on the other hand, Rizwan Beyg also being a very famous designer says that there will be no impact on the changing trends of the shalwar. He believes that shalwar can never go out of fashion.

Although the impact of the changing trends in shalwar could only be analyzed now that it has gone through so many changes. It is not like the changes have not been popular amongst the masses. The Patiala shalwars and the Izzars have been extremely popular in their times, but the kind of views that one gets from designers about the "shalwar" simply tell us that the shalwar can be described as something extremely eternal. So the question is why this is so?

The article “Ready, Steady, Go” in the “Express Tribune” (Jan 5, 2011) by Hani Taha discusses how three piece suits are now going out of fashion and people are preferably buying Pret. It states that westernized clothing is all about ‘mix n match’ which has promoted this and now people buy one piece kurtas and use one shalwar and that also in very few cases they just get pants. Brands like Ego, Daaman and sheep are providing customers with ready to wear tops. This is a whole new concept of selling ready to wear, where the upper garment is sold individually, leaving the customer with their choice of lower garments. However, in some stores like Fnkasia one also comes across shalwars that are either slightly printed or embroidered and sold individually but these individual shalwars are not very popularly worn by the masses. The
article tells us that focus is more towards the upper garment if we study the trends of shalwars in this time.

In this article it is very obvious that the changing trends of shalwar which are now replaced with pants are much more preferable as compared to the cultural shalwars. Also that these popular stores mainly focus on kurtas and kameez these days as compared to shalwars and places like Fnkasia where they have tried to focus on shalwars, it is still not popular enough to be sold.

In another article called; “Will the real Pakistani women please stand up” in the “Newsline” (Mar 15, 2005) by Shimaila Marti Dawood is based upon the identity of a Pakistani woman, it talks about how we have adopted westernization and what effect it has on us and what the overall view of such women is. It discusses how these females have been put forward because of their get up and where they stand in life where as a lady wearing a regular shalwar kameez is just looked down upon and are going through metamorphosis.

This article sums up that some people who have not accepted the changing trends of the shalwar are looked down upon by the people who have accepted the change. The people who have accepted the change do not take shalwar as a fashion statement.

In an article posted by Omer on the 20th Nov 2009 to the “Fashion Industry Network”. “Shalwar Kameez” talks about how a dress is supposed to be an identity of a nation and it speaks of one’s nationality without asking. It states that the national dress of Pakistan is the shalwar kameez which is popular among men, women and children and the dress remains the same throughout the provinces with a little twist in it. It further discusses the shalwar and talks about how this
dress is worn formally and casually both. It describes the kameez and the achkan the importance of both and how they are worn on different bottoms such as jeans and trousers. The writer states that the kameez holds a very important place as the whole dress may it be worn with a shalwar or a pant looks very tidy and states ones nationality.

This article very clearly states that it has disregarded the shalwar and the main focus and importance has been given to the kameez whereas the shalwar is very much part of our national dress and it does show our nationality it just isn’t a garment that is worn for comfort

In an article “Pakistani/Patani Shalwar Kameez”, written by, “Manpreet Kaur” on Mar 04 2010.

The opening line for this article is “Language and fashion change at every single mile that one proceeds to”. The author states that may it be the same dress that is common throughout one country or several countries but it is sure to have a lot of dissimilarities and as different people adopt this yet it is called the identity but that too with a twist. The article discusses that the shalwar kameez is associated with Pakistan, India and Bangladesh the outlook of the outfit has a slight change when it crosses the borders. He states that the Pakistani/Pathani shalwar kameez is very famous overseas. The shalwar kameez has another name also which is the Pathani suit. The people of Pakistan have adopted different cultures and they have let those bring variations to their traditions. The article discusses that the Pakistani shalwar kameez has features to keep the kameez knee length, the author believes that the shalwar kameez has gone through a lot of experimentations and now and ethnic looking shalwar kameez can be given a cocktail look.

7 achkan: a close-fitting, high-necked coat, slightly flared below the waist and reaching almost to the knee, worn by men in India.
http://www.macmillandictionary.com/thesaurus
The article can be brought down to the fact that one has experimented with the shalwar kameez to an extent that it has lost its identity and the impact of this change is very negative on the shalwar.

The limitation of the literature was the lack of books on the topic; there were no specified books which stated the origin the types or the changes that the shalwar had gone through. This research will fill this gap with the help of interviews taken from different designers which will give a professional view to the changes that have occurred in this garment furthermore with the help of surveys and blogs it will give an over view about what the people believe about the changes on the shalwar. A study of different articles will help in the understanding of our fashion industry and where does this garment stand in the present day.
Research Methodology

This research will mainly be divided into two parts, the first part will comprise of the origin, and the types of shalwar which will be achieved from different books and articles, it will analyze different articles in terms of acceptance and rejection of the shalwar. This analysis will make it easier for the reader to understand the changes once the origin and history is studied. A collection of different articles from the Express Tribune, The Women Features Services, The Newsline Magazine, Fashion Industry Service and different blogs have been used to attain this information. The second part of the research will comprise of interviews and surveys. It will further discuss the interviews taken from the designers so that a proper overview from the professionals of this field can be achieved.

My question which is ‘what is the impact of the changing trends on the shalwar?’ Is it a negative or a positive change? Have people accepted or rejected this change? To achieve the answer to my question I will have to survey the general public from different areas, that I will achieve by visiting malls, universities and supermarkets and conducting my surveys in these places to attain the answer to how many people have accepted the change in the shalwar. It is very important for my research to take interviews from fashion designers so that a professional overview can be achieved. Furthermore I will do a thorough study of different articles so that an overview of other people can be attained.

Types Of Research:

I have used quantitative and qualitative methods to carry on my research. It was important for me to use both the methods of research because when I survey the general public I will find out how many people have accepted the changing trends of a shalwar and what is the age group that have
most accepted this change. Additionally, it is important for me to also do quantitative research so to find out what professional, being designers think about the changing trends

**Approach:**

This part will consist of the origin and the types of the shalwar. An analysis on the history will make it easier for the reader to understand the changes the shalwar has gone through once the types and origin is studied. Different articles will be discussed in detail to show the acceptance and rejection of the changes that the shalwar has gone through. It will also discuss different blogs where a general opinion of people will be taken.

This part of research will consist of all the first hand information which will be achieved through surveys, these will be conducted at different universities, malls and supermarkets. They were also divided in terms of areas namely Clifton, Defence, Tariqroad and Gulshan. The interview taken were from different fashion designers and design students so that first hand information from the professional from this field can be achieved.

**Participant Observation:**

I will visit local tailors from different areas to study the trends which are going around in the general public and what are the trends that the housewives and young women follow. This sort of research will answer the question whether the change in the shalwar people have accepted or rejected in the local market

**Empirical Research:**

In terms of primary research this will comprise of first hand interviews which will be conducted from different designers and different students from universities namely SZABIST, Indus Valley
School of Art and Architecture, DOW MEDICAL COLLEGE. This will state how do the designers feel about the change in the shalwar and what do they think did this have an impact on the shalwar was this negative or positive or do they believe the complete opposite as in that no change has occurred in it at all. furthermore it will show students from different backgrounds feel about this garment and what are their views towards this topic.

**Market Research:**

The market research will determine the current trends as in what the designers are suggesting may it be in lawn or formal wear. Prêt wear shops will be observed and researched to see the local trends. What lower garments are these shops suggesting and what is the purchasing rate are women demanding the need to bring the shalwar back into the day to day attire or do they agree with the change that has come in the trends. What fabric women are purchasing and for what purpose are they buying the fabric. The shopkeepers would be researched to see what the women are buying and what their age groups are.

**Data Analysis:**

In order to answer the question regarding an investigation into change of the garment, data has to be analyzed through a multitude of perspectives. This would include comparative analysis as well as contextual analysis. This would be because the question includes a large timeline to deal with along with the change of generations that has come about amongst the acceptance or rejection of these changes. Comparative would help one discover what originally the garment used to be like and how far has it ‘evolved’ to suit the modern environment Furthermore a contextual analysis would help to deduce the changes in the taste of people. Also it would help in further answering the question as to what is the impact of the changing trends on the shalwar.
Since mentioned before that the data collected from primary research as well as secondary research is being analyzed through different approaches, since the research includes a vast timeline to deal with, different kinds of analysis could be summed up under the umbrella of comparative analysis of past and present wherein observing how the changes in garment came about. How many people accepted this change and how many rejected it and who were these people. This will eventually lead in investigating the evolution in the market and to understand the impact on the garment. For such data to be collected, in the field the participant observation would take place.

**Ethical Consideration:**

Taking care of ethical considerations, the names of the designers were asked if they could be put into this research paper and the information given by them will solely be used for this research paper. The names will only be published for this research paper.

**Expectations:**

Selecting the factors; that is the impact of the changing trends on the shalwar the acceptance or rejection of the people. The dissertation hopes to find how far these changes have affected the shalwar that is if any have occurred. How many women have accepted this change? Is this change negative or positive? Furthermore it is waited to be seen as to if there actually has any change taken place comparing experts’ documentation or is it just a inaccurate assumption. And if any changes have occurred what are they. Are they assumed factors majorly involved in this change or are there something else?
**Limitations:**

Some of the limitations faced while writing the research paper were finding related literature on this topic was very difficult as there aren’t many books on shalwar and how its evolved over time, which is a drawback as it is the limitation. The other problem about looking into such literature is that it has a target audience that it is discussing which limits my research and makes it a problem.

The other limitations faced for this research were the availability of the designers due a busy schedule. Hence choosing to interview designers was beneficially in terms of information as most of these designers were very keen on answering the questions and were readily giving a detailed overview. Even though this was second hand data it was the most effective as the information was given on the spot but it had its limitations due to availabilities of the interviewers.

The surveys weren’t very easy to do at universities because some student just didn’t want the fill out the questioner while others made fun of it or they just filled it out for fun, so to get a proper overview in the beginning seemed like a problem. Malls and super markets and other public places were also a problem as people were not very ready to interact didn’t want to fill in the survey form and believed it was being done for a useless cause. The women older than 30 thought they are being disturbed either complained if in a private club or would just get up and leave. There were very few who answered the questioner responsibly. These survey were very important for this research as they identified the different age groups which had accepted or rejected the changes in the shalwar. It also gave an idea if they would want to revive the classic
traditional shalwar once again. The samples of the interviews chosen were mainly Karachi because of the expected difficulty of conducting multi-city surveys and interviews.

**Strengths:**

The availability of transport to visit markets and stores to keep an observation on the trends made it easy for the research because a hindrance in the transport would have made this difficult. The access to phone numbers and contacts to designers made it easy in taking one step ahead in the research.
Findings and Discussions

The shalwar is the basic lower garment which was inspired from the Mughal attire. Shalwar; which has rich historical roots which are deeply seated in the medieval India and Persia. The shalwar has evolved over the years but no matter what changes have occurred in it, its inspiration from the Mughal attire remains the same.

The basic shalwar had gathers on the front and has an opening at its bottom that of 4 to 5 inch’s. This was a part of every females wardrobe may it be a house wife, school going girls, office going women, maids etc. there was no class differentiation when it came to the shalwar. Like every garment the shalwar also evolved over the years and the evolution of the shalwar began with its variations and its different types were made. The visible change that occurred in the shalwar was that its front gathers were made more and a volume was given to it, its bottom opening was increased to 7 to 8 inches and this usually came in the feet while walking or standing. These shalwars had variations in them on their own also which was a vast variety of different types. These types were accepted by the younger generation, girls started wearing Patiala and dhoti shalwars to mehandi functions. The older generation didn’t really accept this change they thought that the regular shalwar was best for them. The Patiala traveled into the daily attire for young girls; these were usually worn under short shirts. Once the lengths started increasing the volume of the shalwar started getting lesser. This change of straight shalwars which would end a few inches above the ankle was readily accepted by all. There was no age group which wasn’t ready to adapt this change at once. By this time there was a variety one
could wear. Later down the same road came the 8 trousers, 9 culottes and 10 capri’s this is when the change came as we know “As we all know fashion is like water and sand it can never be held in the hand”. The shalwar was taken by these garments, there were more choices but the question still remains to what was the impact on the people by this change did the garment lose its identity. Who are the people who have accepted or rejected this change?

All these upcoming trends and changes in the garments feel like one was given a vast choice to what the person wanted to wear. Some people believe that the increasing lengths of the shirts wouldn’t look as nice with a shalwar as they look with the pants.

Rizwan Beyg a famous fashion designer believes that trousers, culottes and capris are variations of the shalwar and people are just experimenting once they are done they will come back to the shalwar. Whereas Umer Sayeed another fashion designer who has made a niche with his bridal collection thinks that the variations has killed the traditional shalwar and these changes should have never happened.

8 trousers (noun): a piece of clothing covering the body from the waist to the feet, divided into separate parts for each leg and worn by both men and women. http://www.macmillandictionary.com/thesaurus-category/british/Trousers-and-shorts

9 culottes: (Noun) women’s short trousers that have wide legs and look like a skirt

10 Capris (noun): women’s narrow trousers that end just below the knee
Aamir Tariq, a graduate from Asian Institute of Fashion Design currently working for Ego and who also works privately says “I don’t think that the shalwar is a garment, it a costume and no pants, culottes or capris has replaced the shalwar. Those have their own identity. The reason why I believe the shalwar is not being worn now is because the gathers makes one look fat. Shalwar might come back in fashion in the next 5 years but it won’t be a part of the daily attire”.

Aamir’s views are completely opposite of Rizwan and Umer’s they believe that the shalwar is a cultural and traditional garment whereas Aamir thinks it’s just a costume. Rizwan thinks that pants, culottes etc are just variations of the basic shalwar but Aamir states that they have their own identity. Umer Sayeed on the other hand doesn’t agree with either of them and thinks that the variations have just killed the beauty of the traditional shalwar. Aamir and Rizwan both also disagree on the part where one says that once variations are done and experimented the basic shalwar will be back on the other hand Aamir says that even if it does it won’t be a part of the daily attire.

In an interview with Syed Rizwanullah when asked the importance of the shalwar he said “The shalwar is an asset to our fashion industry”. He believes that the shalwar is not a tradition that is dying he also says: “traditions if ever faded always are in some way or the other revived”. He claims that the shalwar can never die because of its comfort. He thinks that the changes that have occurred in the shalwar are very positive “change is the future” and he also believes that it can never be determined that the trousers, culottes have been derived out of the shalwar or is its variation, he says that the shalwar has its own variations e.g. Dhoti, Jaipur , Patiala etc he says the list is never ending then how can one call a completely different thing its variation? He also says that there can’t be a specified age group of people who accept or reject this change because
“age is just numbers. If you understand fashion you will always accept change.” He believes that there is a market for everything one can’t categorize because “fashion is a matter of perception”.

Comparing the above three interviews Rizwanullah’s idea of the shalwar is that its existence, changes, acceptance is completely different firstly he believes very strongly that the shalwar is a tradition which has never died. Secondly he doesn’t believe in the age group for acceptance or rejection he believes the person who understands fashion can understand change that to he doesn’t put as a statement he believes that everyone has their own perception and choices.

A national dress states ones nationality without asking and is supposed to be the identity of one’s nation. The Shalwar Kameez is the national dress of Pakistan and it is famous among men, women and children. The shalwar kameez is worn formally and casually both. Each province of Pakistan shares the same national dress but it has added a little too it from their own culture. The shalwar kameez is a complete dress and looks very neat. In the present day people and designers have started emphasizing on the kameez more than the shalwar. The shalwar is very rarely seen in a designer wear store, it is only make to order, you never see a shalwar paired with a kameez on display. There are designers like Ego, Sheep, Daaman etc which are solely working on different styles of kameez which can be paired up with anything jeans, trousers, capri’s etc. The in thing today are the different lengths of the kameez the cut the style the prints no one actually thinks or pair the kameez with a decent looking white shalwar the white pant seems to have taken over, so how can one say that the pant and the kameez is the national dress of Pakistan where did the shalwar go?

The shalwar kameez has been experimented on since the ages and due to those experiments the shalwar has lost its essences so much so that the decent ethnic shalwar kameez is now brought to
a point where it has a cocktail look to it. How can a cocktail look be our national dress how cant it represent us? The shalwar holds a lot of importance it makes the dress look complete. It can look fashionable and decent both at the same time it all depends on how one carries themselves.

Surveys were conducted at design schools, business schools and medical colleges namely Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture. Zabist and Dow medical college and at general public places such as Park towers and Dolmen mall. These surveys were done between ages 18 to 25 and 45 and above. The answers basically varied area to area and school to school. The design students of at IVS 85% stated that a change has occurred, the reasons they gave for this change was the influence from the western market. Some stated that the change has occurred just in the volume and the bottom end openings. Some of them even said that people have let a change come to increase the level of comfort. The same group thinks it’s a positive change because the garment needed the variety, progression has been very good for the garment it’s changed the level of acceptance. Some people state that as long as people are happy they make whatever they wear a part of their culture. Some people believe that the positive change has occurred due the further understanding in terms of designing. The 10% who disagreed with any sort of change that has occurred, the reason they gave was that people wear whatever they are comfortable in and they create their own fashion. They state that any sort of change in the shalwar will be considered negative as it is a fashion statement on its own and it’s part of our culture. The remaining 5% which had neutral answers stated that they don’t mind the change and don’t believe anything can be negative or positive it depends on how its changed and why it was changed. They feel they can only decided if they want to accept or reject the change once they want to wear the shalwar and where they want to wear it.
The students from Zabist 50% didn’t care that any change had occurred at all they believed whatever was in fashion and looked nice on them they would wear it. They think change happened for a good cause and they would accept it because the designers know best. They claimed that if ever they were given place to wear a shalwar they would wear to formal occasion like a mehandi. The rest of the 50% stated that the shalwar has changed over the years and the changes have occurred in terms of cut shape and design. They feel this change has occurred to meet up with the western market. They think the change is positive and negative both and say one shouldn’t forget their own cultural values. When they were asked when and where would they prefer wearing the shalwar they stated in crowded areas where they wouldn’t want to attract attention.

The students from Dow medical college stated somewhat the same as the initial 50% of the Zabist students. They said that they would wear anything and everything in fashion but they also said that they wear whatever they feel like it may it be shalwar or pants. They prefer wearing pants as they look better under long kameez and they have to be dressed up to date to fit in the crowd. The change they believe can be negative and positive both, it depends.

The surveys which were conducted at Park Tower’s were of women ranging 35 and above. 80% of women claimed that the change in the shalwar was needed and the extra volumes had to go as they make one look fat, the change they stated was very positive and pants made one look very trendy and slim. They stated that they did have shalwars but they don’t prefer wearing them as they are a hassle to iron. When asked what they think a part from being up to date what makes them accept this change they claim because of social reasons, they state that they would wear the shalwar at home because it is very comfortable but never outside. The remaining 20% believed that the change in the shalwar was very negative as shalwar is a very comfortable garment and
it’s very airy they claim if you look at it from a religious point of view it’s not tight fitted and
doesn’t look bad or attract attention

The women at dolmen mall Tariq road 15% stated that the change in the shalwar was really
acceptable as its very different now women of their age can also look fashionable and won’t be
questioned or judged by people as everyone’s wearing pants and culottes. They believe the
shalwar has its own essences and is very comfortable and if worn occasionally it looks very
elegant. The remaining 85% ladies claimed that they liked the shalwar it suited their age they felt
that pants are meant for young girls and such fashion looks nice on them. They say that they
don’t know if the change is positive or negative as they themselves haven’t gone through a
change in terms of replacing or adapting anything new.

According to Islamic dress code the female figure shouldn’t be evident through the clothes hence
with the advent of Islam and the changing culture the overlapping gave birth to the shalwar. The
baggy feature of the garment does not emphasis any body part waist below of the female. Many
women today still wear the shalwar because of religious reasons they believe that the shalwar
keeps them covered in a proper way unlike the trousers or pants which make the shape of the
body. Women also state that they chose to wear a shalwar in certain areas where they don’t want
to attract unwanted attention hence it is clear that the shalwar is the best way to keep one covered
without attracting attention if one doesn’t chose to wear an abaya.

The local tailors of the different areas namely Tariq road, Gulshan, Clifton and Defence show
that different house wives of all these areas follow the trends and 90% women are getting
trousers, pants and culottes stitched under their kameezes as that’s the design shown in the lawn
catalogue. The 10% who don’t get these stitched and get shalwars made the tailors believe are
religious or old fashioned ladies. These women don’t really have an exposure to the real thing they follow what they believe is fashion because that’s what they are looking at. People today don’t believe that what they wear should suit them they just wear it because that’s what they saw in a magazine for a TV drama serial. The importance and the beauty of the shalwar is something that everyone should be made aware of.

The shalwar seemed progressed from what is was to people, but change is always not for the good or the same, as personal opinions seems to be in the case of the impact of the changing trends on the shalwar. As buyers the peoples knowledge should be increased to what the identity of the shalwar was, what cultural importance it held so that they know what their role is in changing the identity of this garment because till the buyer does not insist on change the supplier wouldn’t care to meet the need. Whereas some fashion designers believe that the shalwar hasn’t changed or lost its identity these are just variations of the shalwar where as some claim that the shalwar has its own kinds in numerous numbers that it doesn’t need any variations.
Conclusion

During the course of this dissertation it was found that the shalwar went through different evolutions and each stage was accepted by different people from different age groups. Every designer had his own viewpoint about the garment and its identity, each had their own way of expressing the change being negative or positive. The series of surveys show that 80% of the people belonging to different age groups have agreed with the changes and believe it to be positive, they think that pants, culottes etc don’t have an effect on the identity of the shalwar and that will always remain in its true form where as the remaining 20% disagree by stating that the change is negative and due to this change the identity of the shalwar is effected and it has lost it’s traditional and cultural existence. The shalwar has a very rich cultural background; it is a part of our culture and also a part of our national dress. The different variations that a shalwar has gone through should be noticed and looked further in detail upon how the changes are; whether they are negative or positive. After analyzing the findings it is understood that people have accepted and rejected this change due to the comfort level or as a fashion statement. The importance of the garments need to be understood by the masses made fashion and they need to know how to make this fashion.
Appendixes:

Form used for surveys at universities, supermarkets, malls etc.

Gender:

Occupation:

Age:

Please answer the following questions:

Do you think the shalwar has changed over the years? Yes or no. Why?

Do you think these changes are negative or positive? Yes or no. Why?

What factor do you think makes people accept or reject the change?

a) Religion

b) Social

c) Other: __________________________________________
What age group do you think has accepted or rejected the change?

Why and where do you prefer to wear a shalwar with your kameez?

What would you prefer as a lower garment under the kameez?

   a) Shalwar
   b) Jeans
   c) Churidar
   d) Pants
Interviews of the designers:

Name: Aamir Tariq

Education: Fashion designer from AIFD

Working: EGO and does costumes for plays namely the Moulin Rouge

What do you think is Shalwar a dying tradition?

Shalwar is not a tradition it is a costume and it isn’t excepted globally.

Do you think the shalwar will revive?

It might but it will only be a part of the house wear attire not daily use.

Is this dying tradition a good sign?

I don’t think its dying it has only been taken over by pants, trousers, culottes etc.
Why have people accepted or rejected this garment?

People have rejected this garment because the gathers of the shalwar makes one look fat and no one wants to look fat.
Name: Syed Rizwanullah

Education: Fashion designer from PSFD.

Do you think the traditional shalwar has dyed?

Not at all. I think that traditions somehow always revive, even if they fade away it always remains. The shalwar can never die the comfort level is very high.

What do u think are the changes in this garment good or bad?

It’s a positive change because change is always the future and positive and negative always varies from person to person you can’t restrict that.

What variations of the shalwar do you think have been accepted and what age groups do you think have rejected this change?

Age is just a number. If you understand fashion you will always accept fashion.

Do you think the shalwar will make a comeback?

I think that the shalwar never died and people still wear the shalwar.
Who do you think are the designers who have accepted the change?

The shalwar is an asset to our fashion industry.

Lastly to answer all your questions fashion is a matter of one’s perception.
Name: Rizwan Begy

Do you think the traditional shalwar has dyed?

I don’t think the shalwar has gone; the catwalk is full of its variations.

Is the change on the shalwar positive or negative?

Its just a phase of experimentation and soon people will get their fill of the culottes and the izzars and will return to the old faithful shalwar its very much being a Pakistani.

Name: Umer Saeed

Do you think the shalwar has dyed?

I hate all the variations of the shalwar. These variations have killed the traditional shalwar.
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