

# **A STUDY ON THE ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT OF FASHION EDUCATION IN INDIA**

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# **A STUDY ON THE ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT OF FASHION EDUCATION IN INDIA**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Education has been given a top priority in the Knowledge Based-Society. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century the socioeconomic transformation of India mainly depends on Knowledge Base. During the last six decades, the higher education in India has expended remarkable. In the higher education sector of India, there are 46 central universities, 373 state universities, 123 deemed universities, 263 private universities, 138 institutions which are of national importance, and more than 39,071 colleges functioning under these universities and institutions (AISHE, MHRD, 2018). An institute of national importance in India is described by AICTE (2018), as one which serves as a pivotal player in developing highly skilled personnel within the specified region of the country or state. Only a chosen few institutions make it to this coveted list and are usually supported by the Government of India or even any other international institutes to develop institutes of excellence in research, academics, and other such elite schools of education. Vocational education is also called Career and Technical Education, prepares learners for jobs that are based in manual or practical activities, traditionally non-academic and totally related to a specific trade, occupation or vocation. It is also sometimes referred to as technical education as the learner directly develops expertise in a particular group of techniques or technology. The last four decades have been witnessed a sea change in the system of Higher Education. Several new and innovative educational programs have evolved in response to the changes in the society, market forces and due to globalization. Fashion Education was also evolved and emerged as a demanding Professional Programme during these years, now which is being offered as an interdisciplinary subject all over the world. It has been evolved has a popular carrier choice for the students.

The Indian government had recognized the need for a vocational education institute of national importance in the evolving Indian fashion field and started the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), the first institute at New Delhi during 1986, with a two-year diploma programme in Fashion Design. In view of the growing need for professionals at national and international levels of fashion industry fortified NIFT to proliferate to various institutes all around India. NIFT is offering the courses related to Fashion design, Fashion

technology and Fashion management. These courses are offered at different levels like Doctoral studies (from the year 2009 onwards), Postgraduate - Master of Fashion Management (M.F.M), Master of Design (M.Des), Master of Fashion Technology (M.F.Tech.), Undergraduate - B.Des and B.F.Tech (Fashion Design, Textile Design, Accessory Design, Knitwear Design, Leather Design and Fashion Communication, and Bachelor of Fashion Technology), continuing education, for a duration of three months to four years. Keeping in view, the predominant role played by NIFT, Govt. of India recognized the importance and made the Institute a “Center of Excellence” by giving statutory status with implementing NIFT Act in the Parliament from the year 2006. NIFT Act, 2006 published in the Gazette of India on 14th July, 2006 confers Statutory Status on NIFT. According to the Gazette of India the NIFT Act definitions “fashion” includes a popular trend or a lifestyle, specially in styles of dress and ornament or manners of behaviour or the business of creating, promoting or studying styles in vogue or the designing, production and marketing of new styles of goods such as, clothing, accessories, craft and cosmetics; and the words “fashion technology” with their grammatical variations and cognate expressions, shall be construed accordingly. The Act empowered the Institute to award degrees and other academic distinctions. With all these recognitions NIFT has become a role model for many other fashion institutions in India in terms of its academic activities including; programmes, resources, curriculum, teaching methods etc. As such, the present study confines to the Institutes of NIFT, spread across the country.

As per the survey of Outlook Magazine (July 2018) in the top ten Fashion Technology colleges in India, first three colleges are NIFT institutes and out of all ten enlisted colleges nine colleges are NIFT institutes. As per the survey of THE WEEK Magazine (June 2017) in the top ten Fashion Technology colleges in India, first three colleges are NIFT institutes and out of all ten enlisted colleges eight colleges are NIFT institutes. An almost similar trend is continuing for the last many years in both the survey reports of these magazines. This shows the excellence of NIFT in Indian Fashion Design Education. According to an international survey conducted by the CEOWORLD magazine, published in April 2018, NIFT stands in 17<sup>th</sup> rank among the best fashion schools in the world. Further in the Higher Education system of India, NIFT stands along with other institutions, like IIT, IISc, NIT in the list of “Institutes of National Importance”.

Because of its interdisciplinary nature the teaching faculty are from different disciplines and the students admitted are from different academic backgrounds. It is important to study the

academic management in the institutions of this kind to explore the learning culture and the student's approaches to learning. Since 1986, fashion education is being offered in India but no specific research related to academic management is found. The present study was attempted to explore the academic management in Fashion Education in India.

## **2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The review of related concepts and theories, and compilation of the conceptual framework on academic management and related aspects have been very important to an in-depth understanding of the subject domain knowledge. It also acted as a base frame to provide the right context and direction to the study. Critical dimensions and parameters of the data collection tools and techniques were also initiated and outlined based on the conceptual framework. The various research study aspects covered in the present study are academic management, Interdisciplinary curriculum design and transaction, Learning culture and students approach to learning, Profile of students and teachers.

### **2.1 Academic Management**

Academic Management, the obvious meaning of the phrase one can presume that the management of academics in educational institutions. According to the Cambridge dictionary the word academic relates to schools, colleges, and universities, or connected with studying and thinking, but not with practical skills. According to the NIFT Ordinances definitions, published in the Gazette of India on 27th February, 2018, "academic" means the activities concerned with teaching, learning, training, evaluation or examination, and research. Academic management term has been widely seen in the literature by authors, using in a very casual manner as a synonym for administrative work by teachers. Frequently administration, management and leadership terms have found overlapping in the literature. According to Bush (2006) "Management" is widely used in Britain, Europe, and Africa while "Administration" is preferred in the United States, Canada, and Australia. However, Management is a very broad term and can have various meanings depending on the context and the application. In the contest of public management and administration, according to Hughes (2012) management involves control or gain result, while administration essentially involves instructions and service. The phrase Academic Management System is widely popular as a title of computer packages used for education management of students,

admissions and resources at educational institutions. Even though initially the management concepts are borrowed from industry and commerce, now it is established field with its own theories and research. The functions of any management can be bifurcated into different levels: strategic (relationship of the organization and its likely future environment), administrative (setting up formal structure), and operating (effective use of resources) it is based on Ansoff (1968) classification of decisions in any system.

According to Huisman and Pausits (2010) the activities of teaching, learning, study and research are academic, and thus administration of examinations, the office of syllabus planning and the degree office belongs to - Academic Management; procurement, maintenance, public relations and also the department of staffing, human resources and finance are generally classified as - Non-Academic i.e., Administration. According to Mukhopadhyay (2016) Academic management consist five major components, which are Admission, Curricular planning and management, Management of instruction, Management of student assessment and planning, Management of co-curricular activities.

Kast and Rosenzweig (1985) defined four main areas of management in their model of university organisation; Academic management (teaching, research, and external environment), educational services management (day to day management of students, as well as the record of their academic transcripts), Economic and financial management (finance, accounting, procurement and management of supporting services etc.) and External management ( media, alumni, companies, government agencies and other stakeholders)

For the successful institutions of learning, both academic and administrative functions need to be managed effectively. Administrative activities are necessary to support the academic functions of the institution. According to Fleming (2012) academic management should address the fundamentals of personal managerial skills necessary for academic success. Therefore, the academic management is the central and most important in any successful learning organization. According to Huisman and Pausits (2010) as higher education institutions grow larger and more extensive, the functions demanded of them multiply, and academic administration and management become increasingly complex; the need for skilled management and administrative personnel become more acute.

The term Academic Management could be understood in the present context as all major academic activities related to Curriculum, teaching, learning and research in a higher educational institution. In a narrower sense, the term indicates key areas of activity that an

academic has to follow when formulating or designing a course or semester and managing (delivering) it. The term – academic management - basically implies those activities, which are to be done by teachers in higher education to be able to perform his/her work in a meaningful way to meet the objectives of the institution and personal growth. It is assumed that all those who are involved in higher education as teachers have three major areas of responsibility: teaching (and learning), research (e.g., applying and doing) and service (which might include heading/leading a department, leading or being a member of a team, providing service to a community, social responsibility, interdepartmental works). Academic Planning is one of the important components of academic management. Academic Management begins with academic planning.

Academic planning is often seen as the ‘heart and soul of the academic strategic plan’ (Rowley and Sherman, 2004). A strategic plan in an academic institution involves long-term planning exercise based on the present and future need analysis of an institution. The need analysis takes into account a number of areas including the clientele (i.e., student) needs, market demands, etc. This strategic plan includes planning and management of a course, a programme and a project in the higher education context. Planning of a course precedes its management. There is no point in offering a course which is not relevant to the society and needful to the students. Teachers need to be aware of growing trends and markets that are flourishing and not diminishing. Internally, the academic planners need to examine how well the campus resources are serving learners. This is an analysis of how well instructors teach, how well learners learn, how current pedagogical methods affect the discipline and the best methods available to transfer learning effectively (Rowley and Sherman, 2004). These perspectives are necessary to keep in mind prior to the next step of the strategic planning process. While the university faculty needs to look at their own disciplines, they need to look beyond their courses to what is happening in their disciplines. Courses need to be revised and revisited on a regular basis in the light of the larger changes happening in the society, so that they respond to the growing or changing needs that are taking place in that discipline or in the market. In addition, higher education today needs to be sensitive to its clientele as it is now a more conscious generation that will not tolerate mediocrity as educational opportunities are increasingly becoming competitive, as universities compete for students. Thus, academic planning and management is not just a routine activity, done to meet both ends in the departments; this activity requires utmost creativity, innovation, novelty, excellence in teaching and learning environments, followed by an inspiring faculty cadre that commands

respect by their sheer power of knowledge, expertise, and ability to motivate their students. Students expect their teachers to help them realize their full potential in order to enable them to make a positive contribution to the world they live in. They have a right to expect a meaningful engagement during their courses not just “finishing” courses.

In a nutshell the responsibilities of academic management in the NIFT includes, initiation and facilitation of new programmes; curriculum design, delivery, review and compliance; optimal utilization of teachers; facilitate the appointment of Heads of Units and Unit In-charges, chairpersons and institute coordinators; facilitate faculty nominations for domestic and international seminars and conferences; monitor publications done by faculty.

The purpose of any institution is commonly reflected in its vision statement, mission statement, and objectives. To achieve the intended direction and growth of the institution these pronouncements should align and be the driving intention of the academic management at all levels and aspects. National Institute of Fashion Technology being an Institution of higher learning of national importance with full autonomy, how well is concerned about the academic management in the main functions and what is the opinion of students, teachers, unit heads and administrators at head office and NIFT institutes is an important aspect of the research study.

## **2.2 Interdisciplinary Curriculum and its Transaction.**

Curriculum design and transaction are two important aspects of curriculum management. They involve effective utilization of all resources and directing their efforts towards achieving the objectives of the educational institutions. According to Rhoten and Pfirman (2006) interdisciplinary means the integration or synthesis of two or more disparate disciplines, bodies of knowledge, or modes of thinking to produce a meaning, explanation, or product that is more extensive than the sum of its parts. Manathunga, Lant and Mellick (2006) state that the inter-disciplinarily emphasizes “the creative synthesis and new understandings that become possible when two or more disciplines become integrated. Graybill et al. (2006) describe the interdisciplinary approach as one which involves the use of an innovative conceptual framework to synthesize and modifies two or more disciplinary approaches. Nissani (1995) pointed out that interdisciplinarity involves “bringing together in some fashion distinctive components of two or more disciplines”.



As described by the Klein (2006) interdisciplinary teaching at all levels intersects with innovative pedagogies that emphasize exploration and active involvement in the process of making meaning. Teachers use innovative approaches that promote dialogue and commune, problem-posing and problem-solving, and critical thinking. Related structures, strategies, and activities compiled by him are: team-teaching and team planning; collaborative learning and learning communities; clustered and linked courses; core seminars at introductory and capstone levels; theme or problem focus in courses; proactive attention to integration and synthesis; projects and case studies; dyads, triads, and small groups for discussion; game and role playing; inquiry- and discovery-based learning; learning portfolios; experiential- and service-learning, internships, and fieldwork; residential living-learning experiences.

Burns and Sattes (1995) reported that the interdisciplinary teachers, no longer think of themselves as subject specialists but as generalists who organize learning activities around essential questions, themes, or concepts and their subject areas become sources of knowledge and skills that can be applied to larger purposes. As described by Davies, Devlin and Tight (2010) recently worldwide Higher Education Strategic Plans of Governments have been showing renewed emphasis on interdisciplinary approaches to build and stimulate creativity, innovation, leadership and entrepreneurship among their undergraduates to make them capable of competing in today's work market.

As cited by Campbell and Henning (2010) in the 21st century interdisciplinary specialization is an important and a complex issue, as the modern society increasingly demands application-oriented knowledge, and the usability of developed knowledge generally requires the integration of various disciplines. A consensus seems to be forming that knowledge is becoming increasingly interdisciplinary, calling for more interdisciplinary learning (Klein & Newell, 1997).

According to Naik (2015) in the past decade, the professional world of fashion in India has expanded to much more than the art of designing clothes. There are several fields to choose from today's fashion education. You could be a celebrity stylist, a fashion editor or editorial stylist, a shop window designer, a fashion consultant for commercials, apparel or accessory designer, a merchandiser, a fashion buyer, retail expert or an entrepreneur who brings international fashion brands to India. All these fields are interdisciplinary and professionals aspire to work in these fields needs to understand distinct subject knowledge and interdisciplinary approaches to solve the work-front challenges. According to Gbetodeme et

al (2016) any design pertaining to fashion can never be complete without the elements and the principles of design. Norman (2015) stated that in Design schools and universities across the world, considerable time is spent on mastering the craft skills of drawing, construction, materials, manufacturing, and finishing. All these essential subjects of fashion education need an interdisciplinary approach by synthesizing knowledge from the subject disciplines of Fine Arts, Design and Technology.

As Jacobs (1989) found interdisciplinary courses frequently face two problems; potpourri problem: no general structure in interdisciplinary work hence curriculum developers themselves must design a content scope and sequence, Polarity Problem: some teachers feel highly territorial about their subjects and are threatened as new views of their subject are promoted. According to him to avoid these two problems, effective interdisciplinary programs must meet two criteria; they must have carefully conceived design features: a scope and sequence, a cognitive taxonomy to encourage thinking skills, behavioral indicators of attitudinal change, and a solid evaluation scheme, they must use both discipline-field-based and interdisciplinary experiences for students in the curriculum. However, the curriculum design should lead to active teaching. Clark (1995) identified four of each cognitive and affective goals of active teaching at the Higher Education. These comprised four cognitive components: knowledge; organization of instruction; clarity of expression; and quality of presentation, the four affective components: student interest; student participation and openness to ideas; interpersonal relations; and communication and fairness.

Integration of separate discipline curriculum approaches into one single curriculum approach to fulfill the specific needs of industry is necessary for the fashion design education. In which students are exposed to various related disciplines such as management, psychology, media and communication, history, fine arts, architecture, engineering, ICT etc. Fashion education needs a host of activities in designing appropriate and relevant curriculum framework. It is worth knowing about the process of integration of various disciplines knowledge and transacts by synthesizing the required domain of knowledge for enabling students to become fashion professionals.

## **2.3 Learning Culture and Students Approaches to Learning**

Learning culture on institute is actually the external manifestation of the common values, spirits, behavior norms of people on institute who are pursuing and developing their study

and research. Learning culture in academic institutions is essential major part of academic culture. The academic culture enhances the construction of institute culture. The institute culture conditions and restricts the development of academic culture. The study of academic culture is the close observation of how academic work is carried out and influenced by an academic environment. Conventions, morals, practices and processes together form culture. In the contest of learning environment it is called learning culture. Learning culture should create and encourage effective learning and teaching.

Shen and Tian (2012) opined that the Academic culture of universities mainly consists of academic outlooks, academic spirits, academic ethics and academic environments. Whereas the academic spirits are the thoughts and believes developed and condensed from the long-term academic practice and activities. Academic cultures influence to determine student achievements and behavior. According to Dill (1982) if the common academic culture has not been carefully nurtured during periods of prosperity, the result can be destructive conflicts between faculties, loss of professional morale, and personal alienation. According to an analysis Sanford (1971) determined that personality and culture are intimately bounded up together that we can hardly think of changing one without the other. According to Dill (1982) the celebration of academic values such as honesty, sustained curiosity, the communication of knowledge and continued intellectual growth should be necessary conditions for any vital academic culture.

The construction strategies of academic culture and institute culture are: institutions should stick to its mission, enhance cultural confidence and cultural consciousness, integrate culture into the process of talent cultivation, and promote cultural development and innovation. Huisman and Pausits (2010) rightly said that the main ingredients of higher education are: Authority, freedom, autonomy, relevance, impact, effectiveness, and efficiency. Accordingly how these ingredients are inculcated in the academic culture should also be an important strategy of any educational institution.

Hofstede (1986) and Hofstede and Bond (1988) described organisational culture in five categories based on the cross-cultural communication: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity and long term orientations. Power distance refers to the extent to which power is perceived to be distributed equally amongst social hierarchies. Uncertainty avoidance represents a group's acceptance of uncertainty or tolerance to change. The third category of individualism versus collectivism represents the degree to which individual society members are integrated into groups or whether more

personal achievements are valued. The gender category is a measure of competitive values (masculinity) over quality of life (femininity).

Different models of Fashion Education curriculum deliverance include classroom, studio, workshops, field visits, crafts studies, industry orientation, industry internships and graduation projects. Further a range of evaluation criteria comprising theory and practical exams, juries, power point presentations, portfolio preparations, model makings etc. NIFT Students can participate in wide range of co-curricular events through Student Development Activity Clubs viz., Cultural Club, Literary Club, Sports, Adventure & Photography (SAP) Club and Ethics, Social Service and Environment (ESSE) Club. 'NIFT Fashion Spectrum' the annual fest of the institute provides a platform for students to showcase their talent in varied inter-collegiate and intra-collegiate activities & events. To promote interaction across institutes all institutes compete at 'Converge' a centralized cultural and sports annual event hosted by any one NIFT Institute. Through the institute's international linkages the students can participate in international competitions, seminars, research, exhibitions and other events it broadens their vision and understands different cultures. Having such opportunities of activities and commune what are the evolved aspects of the prevailing learning culture at NIFT is an important feature for the present study.

In any educational process, based on the prevailing teaching approaches and evaluation methods, the scopes for learning approaches are evolved. Learning can be defined in simple words as the acquisition of knowledge and skills through being taught, study or experience. According to Heikkila et al (2011) the term 'approach to learning' originally referred to how intentions and processes were combined in student learning.

As comprehended by Diseth, A (2007) students' approaches to learning refer to the correspondence between students' intentions, motives and strategies, and they result from students' characteristics interacting with the teaching environment. They are a function of both individual characteristics and the learning context (Newble & Hejka, 1991; Biggs, 2001). Hence, they may be both variable and consistent (Ramsden, 1988). Most of the research literature has, however, focused on students approaches to learning as primarily a result of contextual influences in terms of students' responses to situational demands (Entwistle, 1987; Newble & Clarke, 1987; Entwistle & Tait, 1990; Biggs, 1999). However, the adoption of different approaches to learning is most directly affected by the perceptions of the context, rather than the context in an objective sense (Entwistle, 1987; Biggs, 2001).

The teaching approaches should assist in achieving the objectives of the pedagogy. An approach forms broadly through the amalgamation of a set of principles, beliefs and behavior. Teaching approach gives the overall wisdom; it provides direction and sets expectations to the entire spectrum of the teaching process. It is to consciously choose an appropriate available direction to start and follow any intended learning target. The teaching approach is enlightened viewpoint towards teaching and is superior than teaching method and techniques. The well-recognized teaching approaches in the education research of the professional educational institutions are; subject disciplined or integrated (unified), individualistic or collaborative, indirect (guided) or direct (self), interactive or non-interactive, teacher centered or learner centered, subject-oriented (what to learn) or process-oriented (how to learn), monologue or dialogue, formal or informal, banking or constructivist, intrinsic motivated or extrinsic motivated, and metacognitive or problem-based. They are mainly depending on the levels of engagement and focus of the facilitator and learner. There is no single approach which can guide effective teaching - learning process. According to Gappi (2013) students learn in diverse ways, each of them has their own different styles or preferences in the way they recognize and process information. Further Students have their own preferred way to recognize, retain and retrieve information.

Approaches deal with general philosophies of teaching. While, strategies deal with specific actions. A strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim. Pask (1976) identified the holist and the serialist learning strategies. Students, who adopt a holistic approach, tend to work best by tackling a task as an integrated whole right from the start they work impulsively according to mood and interest. Students who adopt a serialistic approach, on the other hand, tend to work in a systematic, essentially linear way, and tend to approach a complicated task by breaking it down into a series of sub-tasks, mastering each of these separately, and then combining them in order to master the task as a whole.

Deep are surface levels of approach classification was the pioneer work in learning approaches by Marton and Saljo (1976), they at first described the difference which they found among students reading an academic article as deep and surface levels of 'processing', but later this was revised to approaches to learning (Marton and Saljo 1984) both to avoid confusion with the same term used in relation to memory processes, and to make clearer that 'approach' included not only process (Strategy), but also intention (motive). Deep learning approach involves examining new facts and ideas critically, and tying them into existing cognitive structures and making numerous links between ideas. Deep approach is driven by

learners' intrinsic motivation and learners tend to appropriately engage the task in order to maximize understanding (Biggs, 1993). Deep approach factors: seeking meaning, relating ideas, use of evidence, Interest in ideas. On the contrary surface learning approach involves accepting new facts and ideas uncritically and attempting to store them as isolated or unconnected items. Surface approach, on the other hand, is driven by extrinsic motivation. Thus learners usually manage to invest minimal time and efforts to meet the minimal requirements (Biggs, 1993). Surface approaches factors: lack of purpose, unrelated memorizing, syllabus-soundness, fear of failure.

The approach was seen to depend crucially on both the context and the content (Entwistle 1991). Students who are consistently relying on a surface approach actively prefer, and rate more highly, lecturers who provide pre-digested information ready for 'learning', while students with a deep approach prefer lecturers who challenge and stimulate (Entwistle and Tait 1990). Individual differences between students in approaches to learning and studying may remain relatively stable over time and course, the balance between deep and surface for the whole class can be altered by the assessment procedure (Thomas 1986). As reported Svensson (1977) that the students who consistently adopted a deep approach were more successful in passing examinations than those students who consistently adopted a surface approach. Specific to fashion design students project based practical learning, Bailey, S. (2002) detailed that the term 'deep' tends to be associated with characteristics such as talent, originality, commitment, creativity and the ability to think independently. 'Surface' appears to be synonymous with lack of effort, ability or with an absence of enquiry. Additional, two more intermediate stages of learning approaches too were found by him; an intention to develop the design process either through rehearsal and repetition or through experimentation. These were evolved based on the nature of learning activity as practice-based continuum to early text-based. Grounded on the above Barley's study, Lyster and Roberts (2014) improved the four approaches into six approaches. These six approaches were based on viable combinations from focus (product, process and concept) and intension (completion of design project, understanding based on instruction based framework, understanding based on perceptual psychology and creative through experiential) components of practical based learning.

In particular to the skill attribute of learning the term 'Approaches to Learning' has been used by the International Baccalaureate across all their programmes to describe a set of practical skills that provide the foundation for independent learning and encourage the application of

their knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts. Developing and applying these social (collaboration), thinking (critical, creative and transfer), research (information literacy and media literacy), communication (through interaction) and self-management (organisation, affective and reflective) skills helps students learn how to learn (IB 2014). They can also be termed soft skills, life skills, information literacy skills, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills etc., and are not an add on to the curriculum, but are an integral part of assisting student achievement in each subject.

In another perspective from SkillsYouNeed (2007) every student has different approaches while learning. Technically learning approaches means, in which ways the student absorbs, processes, comprehends and retains information. Accordingly approaches have been divided into three categories: the Behaviorist Approach-which is concerned with learners responding to some form of stimulus, the Cognitive Approach- based on knowledge and knowledge retention, the Humanist Approach-based on explanations of individual experience.

Characteristics of the teaching, the department and the student, three of these have an effect on the approach to learning adopted by the student at any one time. According to Newble and Entwistle (1986) the approach students adopt appears to be an important factor in determining both the quantity and the quality of their learning. Students' approaches to learning refer to the correspondence between students' intentions, motives and strategies, and they result from students' characteristics interacting with the teaching environment (Biggs, 2001). They are a function of both individual characteristics and the learning context (Newble & Hejka, 1991; Biggs, 2001). Hence, they may be both variable and consistent (Ramsden, 1988). Students' approaches to learning are defined as "the ways in which students go about their academic tasks, thereby affecting the nature of the learning outcome (Biggs, 1994)." As opined by Alkhalidi (2014) the desired characteristics of interior design education of 21<sup>st</sup> century are; Learner-centered, Discovery-based or constructivist Learning, Systems perspective, Avoid content orientation, Learn how to learn, Inquiry-based scientific methods, Team-based problem solving, Prepare Designers into the sustainable design, Linkage to the real projects.

In the contemporary contest of qualitative research the term approach denotes the type of methodology adopted for a research study. During the end of nineteenth century and the start of the twentieth century various authors used the terms; traditions, varieties, strategies of enquiries, and methods to convey the same meaning. Approaches to learning are dependent

upon a variety of variables, the related important variables are the learning context, the incentives to learning and experimentation, consequences of failure according to Entwistle (1991) findings.

Students approach to learning plays a vital role in fashion education because of its distinguish characteristics; multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, vocational, varying specializations of admitting students their backgrounds, creative and innovative nature etc.

## **2.4 Profile of Students and Teachers**

Teachers are one of the important stakeholders in any educational system. Their active contribution plays an important role in achieving the goals of the institution through set objectives and vision for excelling. While assessing any educational institution, formally or informally, in the academics or the services, profile of teachers plays utmost importance. The apparent three important roles of teachers in any institution are teaching, research and services. With these roles they acquire, generate and disseminate knowledge to students, other learners and their peers. In specific according to Austin et al, (2007): as educators, faculty should understand various strategies for engaging in course design, teaching diverse learners, supporting active learning, using technology to facilitate learning and assessing student learning; As researchers, faculty should framing appropriate questions, designing projects, analysing results, and communicating findings to investors, on the other hand fellow scholars and policy makers; as service providers, faculty should be able to connect theory and practice. Further, making own professional growth and strategic planning, conflict resolution, time management, developing creativity and innovation, and entrepreneurialism are also very important roles.

As cited by Austin (2010) teachers need to have a range of knowledge and skills pertaining to teaching, research, professional attitudes and habits, interpersonal skills, and professional knowledge about higher education (Austin &McDaniels, 2006; Austin, Sorcinelli, & McDaniels, 2007). Insufficient support, an atmosphere of competition and politics, a lack of community, and distance from their senior colleagues influence their career (Mullen and Forbes 2000; Rice, Sorcinelli and Austin 2000).

As an interdisciplinary education how the recurred faculty from general domains are selected, groomed and sustained to the required interdisciplinary competency in academics and



management roles is very important. In view of this, the study of teachers profile on the following issues; demography, background, abilities, skills, expectations, concerns, needs, satisfaction, limitations and challenges are found significant.

Similarly the young students come from different schools, places, backgrounds and disciplines choose fashion, textile, lifestyle, knitwear and communication design courses at NIFT. The industry needs good professionals to design, production and marketing functions, but these skills have to be worked in the institutions. The life of fashion design students takes place in a fast-paced and rigorous academic environment, and students are expected to balance academic, industrial, cultural and social opportunities available to them to get the most out of their college experience. In such dynamic environment - What is their fashion background? What is their main purpose and intention to choose these courses? What they want to become? This needs to be studied from the profile and life perceptions of the students to find whether they have been matching with the purpose of the institution. Further, despite the prevalent situation of competition and demand, students have been showing interest in applying these programmes.

With the above understanding, the study of student profile on the following issues; demography, background, abilities, skills, expectations, concerns, needs, satisfaction, limitations and challenges are found significant.

## **2.5 Emerging Trends and Challenges of Fashion Education**

The necessity of professionals having creativity, innovation and interdisciplinary working capabilities are persistently increasing. Most of the domains of industrial products and services are in need of such professionals to meet the competition and customised consumer requirements. Such industrial needs are creating new opportunities for the fashion design graduating students to move into other creative industry fields. The development of fashion education mirrors the economic development of a country and the stages of its industrial evolution – textile design, followed by fashion design, then the blossoming of all disciplines that relate to advanced industrialization or post-industrial society, from fashion photography to fashion retail management (Gale, 2011). During the recent years fashion design related education is also offered, by other conventional institutions as special programmes, and also as an added portion in the existing curriculums, because of its increasing importance in most of the fields of industry as well as household.

To look after the fashion design professionals growing requirements the fashion design education can be classified into four product line areas and three business areas.

The four main industry product line categories are:

1. Apparel - menswear, womenswear, children wear, leather garments, lingerie, protective wear, etc.
2. Textiles - yarn, fabric, home furnishing, wall and floor coverings, etc.
3. Accessories - Jewellery, handcrafted accessories, packaging, leather accessories, personal accessories, interior products etc.
4. Hand Looms and Handicrafts (in view of its importance considered as a separate category)

On the other hand, the main three fashion business areas evolving are:

1. Fashion marketing and merchandising
2. Media and communication
3. Creative design in any other products

The graduated students work in the above industries and services as professionals like designers, quality managers, production managers, merchandisers, visual merchandisers etc.

To fulfill these new areas professional requirements, fashion education in India is growing very fast and offering different courses. NIFT had spread to non-apparel or textile programmes like Accessory Design, Space Design and Fashion Communication Design to serve the related industry.

According to Huisman and Pausits (2010) as higher education institutions grow larger and more extensive, the functions demanded of them multiply, and academic administration and management become increasingly complex; the need for skilled management and administrative personnel become more acute. According to an internal draft report, circulated for suggestions and comments, across NIFT senior teachers during the year 2015 on 'NIFT Vision-2025' the projected challenges were; rationalization of the programmes, autonomy and excellence, faculty shortage, staff welfare, faculty development & training, research and development, craft cluster initiative, industry connect, incubation centers, leveraging alumni strength, MOOCs, and IT Infrastructure.

Choi, Chow, and Liu (2013) identified that the fashion education system and fashion designers will meet new challenges in the near future. Innovative educations should emphasis on the aspects of new materials, clothing and accessories focusing on ergonomic design with comprehensive foundations for functional fashion design.

Curriculum restructuring of existing programmes and development of new programmes based on the society needs has been always a challenge for Fashion Education Institutions. As stated in NIFT Prospectus-2018 (2017) the nature of fashion has evolved beyond its association with apparel, to become multi-disciplinary and multi-dimensional. Its approach to various concepts, material, technology, craftsmanship, culture, business, economics, promotion, consumption and innovation; has progressed towards creating unexplored areas that present immense scope for continuous study and research in this field. For the fashion education largely the evident challenges starts from; understanding the market needs and translating to viable and competent programmes, attracting right talent students and faculty, creating integrated learning, preparing students for wide variety of careers or occupations, faculty development, funding and infrastructure, placement of passed graduates, formulation of comprehensive, transparent and rational academic policies, competition from other institutions.

### **3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH LITERATURE**

The reviews of Fashion education and higher education related studies helped the investigator in conceptualizing the research problem and taking decisions with respect to the methodology for the study. A total of about 40 studies are reviewed including National and International. Out of which 6 studies are on Academic Management and purpose, 11 studies on interdisciplinary curriculum design, development and restructuring, 8 studies on the profile of teachers and students, and 14 studies are on students learning approaches and culture. Out of all only 16 studies are related to fashion education that too majorly curriculum design and development and very few studies are related to learning approaches.

The reviews conducted on academic management reveals that; Autonomy, trust and confidence are important in the management of higher education (Palamattam, 1992). Active participation of faculty improves the organisational health and management of education (Sharma, 1982). According to Chan (2016) students purposes of education and institution purpose of education are differing, the institutions need to focus on universal objectives.

Kumar, et, al (2009) stated that education is not just about learning skills (how to) but also about developing the ability to decide on what (what to do?) and why (why to do?). It should lead to the development of critical ability in students towards distinguishing between essence and form or between what is of value and what is superficial in life. It should develop their understanding which is a prerequisite for a movement from rule-based society to a relationship based society.

According to Zhen (2009) innovate teaching and strategic partnerships with companies are important in the context of fashion design education further development of creativity and problem-solving skills are very essential capabilities of fashion design students (Ki Kim, 2008). Reviews related to interdisciplinary curriculum revealed that less industry involvement in the development of curriculum, too much theory or lack of enough practical, lack of specialization, inadequate material and equipment (Rael, et, al, 2012). Studies have also highlighted the need of national policy on internalization of higher education, very poor status in research and development, shortage of faculty, inadequate resources in higher education (Raval, Kamble, & Patil, 2012). Reviews highlighted the uneven expansion of fashion education, no clarity in innovative concept, unresponsive curriculum arrangement, lack of outstanding teacher resource, not enough cooperation from industry (Zheng, 2009) and the need for trans-national education for enhancing the global competitiveness (Mock, 2008), lack of the practical link between production, learning and research, lack of innovation in traditional teaching pattern and method (Ying, 2001), need of autonomy to colleges (Palamattam, 1992), need of education development to serve both goals of economic growth and social justice (Robert, 1984), in governance and decision making less participation of the teachers, there is a significant relationship between organizational health and existing decisional participation of the teachers (Sharma 1982). Challenges for higher education are raising expectations of students, competition and government regulations (Vught and Huisman, 2013).

According to Iyer and Roberts (2014) students exhibit a clear variation between product-focused and process-focused approaches, moving towards concept-focused approaches during their progress from the first year to the final year of studies. As found by Diseth (2007) course experience, students approaches to learning and ability were significantly correlated with examination grade, further students perceptions of the learning environment are important sources of approaches to learning.

Thus the review of the related studies provided a framework for the present study. Fashion education in India is emerging field of study and at the same time in the last three decades the establishment of Fashion education NIFT campuses by the government of India and also the private institutions expanded the opportunities for the students to pursue this course. However, the investigator has not come across any specific study on the Academic management of fashion education in India and therefore the present study is conducted.

#### **4. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY**

NIFT campuses in India are under the aegis of the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India and are autonomous in nature, award degrees at undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral levels. The specific character of these institutions is that they do not require to be affiliated to any university as they have statutory status with centre of excellence. On the authority of the objectives given in the NIFT-Act 2006 the NIFT campuses mandate related to academics in the area of fashion is to; promote quality and excellence, lay down various degrees, awarding degrees and honorary degrees, undertake research, establish modern information centre, organise national and international events, act as a nucleus for interaction between academia and industry. As mentioned by Mukhopadhyay (2016) new curriculum with new instructional designs and practices is the best fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. NIFT is the one of the very few such institutions in India having such a paradigm. It is interesting to study how these NIFT campuses have continued to remain centres of excellence in fashion education in India and maintaining its quality with innovative instructional practices.

Contrary to its established Excellency in the interdisciplinary education, it is observed from the NIFT's Placements Cell reports (2012-2017), that in last some years, NIFT is unable to provide 100 per cent placement to its graduates and on the other hand NIFT institutes have increased from seven to seventeen and more institutes will come in the future. The numbers of courses offered in the institutes are also increased, leading to generation of more number of graduates year by year. As for the NIFT vision statement it should proactively develop fashion business. Development of fashion business includes employment generation, exports development, fashion design consultancy and entrepreneurs development etc. During the student's internships, graduation projects, field visits, field study and craft documentations, and real life classroom projects, as part of curriculum, fashion students are required go and

work with the industry. It was noted that the fashion industry expressed that the students are not meeting the industry requirements and also missing the professionalism.

Considering the above points in mind, the investigator has conducted the present study to understand the current status of fashion education in India with the following research questions.

## **5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What is the current scenario of fashion education in India?
2. How is the curriculum composed and transacted in fashion education?
3. What are the profiles of the students and teachers in fashion education?
4. What are the perceptions of the students and teachers with regard to the learning culture in the fashion education?
5. What are the students approaches to learning in Fashion Education?
6. What are the future challenges of Fashion Education in India?

## **6. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

A study on the academic management of fashion education in India

### **6.1 Objectives of the Study**

1. To study the fashion education in India with respect to its purpose, present status and future direction
2. To study the profile of students and teachers of the NIFT Institution
3. To study the academic management of fashion education in terms of academic administration, curriculum design, curriculum transaction, students evaluation and feedback, and resources at NIFT Institution
4. To study the student approaches to learning in the NIFT Institution
5. To study the learning culture in the NIFT Institution
6. To study the developmental challenges of the fashion education in India

### **6.2 Operational Definitions of the Terms**

**Academic Management:** The term ‘Academic Management’ refers to the management of all those academic activities related to the academic administration (academic plans,

availability and optimum utilization of teachers and staff, cordial relations, and students discipline etc.), curriculum design (alignment of institution, programme and courses, weightage of credits and sessions, knowledge and skill components, integration of essential design principles and processes etc.), curriculum transaction (conducive environment, active learning, teachers and students passion, academic outputs, autonomy, teamwork, field visits, real-life exposure etc.) students' evaluation and feedback (criteria, purpose, time availability, nature, transparency, timely feedback, seriousness etc.), and resources ( teachers competency and training requirements, labs, tools, equipment, ambience, ICT facilities, digital resources, international linkages etc.) in the Fashion Education.

**Fashion Education:** The term 'Fashion Education' refers to the academic programmes offered by the National Institutes of Fashion Technology, under the aegis of Ministry of Textiles, Government of India across its campuses in India.

**Learning Culture:** The term 'Learning Culture' refers to the organizational culture that promotes learning of the students and the teachers. It comprises the common values and behavioral norms of people and their social capital. Academic autonomy, innovativeness, freedom to explore new ideas and collaborative practices, academic focus etc. will form the learning culture.

**Student Approaches to Learning:** The students approach to learning refers to the learning styles of the students in fashion education. It includes, self-learning, collaborations, focus, critical thinking, independent learning, lifelong learning, peer learning, mindfulness, metacognition and self-efficacy.

**Profile of Students and Teachers:** This term refers to Socio-cultural economic demographic and educational background of the students and the teachers. It also includes the career aspirations, competencies, accomplishments of the students and teachers including perceptions on life.

**Developmental Challenges:** The term refers to the emerging challenges of fashion education due to economical variability, virtual knowledge, transformation along with technological development and globalization catering to specific academic requirements of students and the teachers and society at large. This will help in understanding the future direction of the fashion education in India.

## **7. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The three main delimitations to facilitate the study within the available time, guidelines and resources are enlisted as follows.

1. The present study is delimited to the National Institute of Fashion Technology and its Campuses across India.
2. The study delimited to four year Bachelor Design Programmes.

## **8. METHODOLOGY**

Mixed methodology approach is adopted in the present study, appropriate qualitative survey and quadrative techniques were used to collecting the data. Purposive clustered sample selection method is used to choose the sample students and teachers. For the qualitative data collection, the respondents were purposively selected from students, teachers and academic administrators. Appropriate data also collected from class observations and document analysis to comprehend the findings and result. The methods, tools and techniques used in the study are described in the following sub-sections.

### **8.1 Population of the Study**

There are total 17 NIFT Campuses all over India and one Head Office at New Delhi under the aegis of the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. There are about 10,000 students pursuing fashion and allied education and 400 fashion educators in various NIFT campuses in a current year. Out of them about 7,300 students undergoing, bachelor design programmes and about 250 teachers facilitating these programmes. Some or all bachelor programmes in design are offered at all the NIFT campuses as for the regional needs. Thus the population constitutes all the students of bachelor design programme of NIFT campuses in India and the concerned teachers and academic administrators. Students are admitted through a national multilevel test. Students of any stream with 10+2 qualification can apply for admission into the bachelor design programmes. Teaching faculties are recruited from multidiscipline backgrounds through a national level recruitment process. There are about 10 academic administrators in each institute and about 12 at head office who are directly involved in academic management. All the NIFT campuses report and comply with the policies and guidelines finalized by the head office from time to time.



## **8.2 Sample of the Study**

The quantitative and qualitative data sample details are described in the following sub-sessions.

### **8.2.1 Sample of the quantitative data survey**

Multi-stage purposive cluster sampling technique was used for the survey sample selection of the NIFT campuses then programmes and finally batches for the research study. The sampling stages are described in the following paragraphs.

Selection of four NIFT campuses out of total seventeen NIFT campuses was done with the following criteria.

1. NIFT campuses which are having at least 15 years of establishment.
2. NIFT campuses which are offering at least five bachelors design programmes.
3. NIFT campuses which were top-ranked in aggregate score by the national surveys of the various agencies during the year 2017.

From the above criteria the four selected NIFT campuses are NIFT New Delhi, NIFT Mumbai, NIFT Bangalore, and NIFT Chennai.

Selection of four bachelor design programmes out of total six programmes was done with the following criteria.

1. The programmes what have common foundation programme.
2. The programmes which have more scope for interdisciplinary learning.
3. The four programmes which are most popular and offered in maximum NIFT campuses.

From the above criteria the four selected programmes are Fashion Design, Textile Design, Accessory Design, and Fashion Communication.

While selecting students simple the following criteria was followed.

1. Students who have completed fifth semester.
2. Students who have completed, industry internship and craft cluster visit.

From the above criteria Bach of 2014-2019 was selected for the study and the batch pursuing their VI or VII semester during the years 2017-2018.

Students of batch 2014-2019 studying in the Fashion Design, Textile Design, Accessory Design or Fashion Communication at NIFT New Delhi, NIFT Mumbai, NIFT Bangalore or

NIFT Chennai were finally identified as the students sample for the survey. Similarly teachers associated with these batches were considered as teacher sample. The following tables represent the total sample of students and teachers, institute wise and programme wise.

Table-1: The sample size of students, NIFT campus and programme wise.

<b>Campus</b>	<b>Programmes</b>				<b>Total</b>
	<b>Fashion Design</b>	<b>Textile Design</b>	<b>Accessory Design</b>	<b>Fashion Communication</b>	
<b>NIFT Delhi</b>	35	37	33	38	143
<b>NIFT Mumbai</b>	58	32	43	37	170
<b>NIFT Bangalore</b>	39	30	35	30	134
<b>NIFT Chennai</b>	37	30	27	27	121
<b>Total available students</b>					<b>568</b>

Table-2: The sample size of teachers, NIFT campus and programme wise.

<b>Campus</b>	<b>Programmes</b>				<b>Total</b>
	<b>Fashion Design</b>	<b>Textile Design</b>	<b>Accessory Design</b>	<b>Fashion Communication</b>	
<b>NIFT Delhi</b>	7	8	4	5	24
<b>NIFT Mumbai</b>	6	5	2	4	17
<b>NIFT Bangalore</b>	5	4	5	5	19
<b>NIFT Chennai</b>	5	5	3	3	16
<b>Total available teachers</b>					<b>76</b>

### 8.2.2 Respondents of qualitative data

Being a mixed method of research following techniques was used to collect the qualitative data.

Table-3: List of qualitative techniques adopted and their particulars

Technique	Source of data	Total in no's
<b>Interview Schedules</b>	Academic Heads at the NIFT Campuses	40
	Academic Heads at the Head Office	10
<b>Focus Group Discussions</b>	Students (class wise)	16
	Teachers (Institute wise)	04
<b>Classroom Observations</b>	Theory or Practical (class wise)	16
<b>Document Analysis</b>	NIFT Act 2006, NIFT Statute, NIFT Ordinance, NIFT Manuals (Academic and Establishment), NIFT Reports (Convocation, Annual and Placement) Admission Prospectus, etc.	Not applicable

### 8.3 Research Tools

Various tools and techniques used in the mixed method approach of the research are explained in the following paragraphs.

- 1. Questionnaires:** Survey method was used to collect base data from students and teachers through two questionnaires. The researcher has constructed the questionnaires namely Academic Management of Fashion Education Questionnaire for faculty (AMFEQ-F) and Academic Management of Fashion Education Questionnaire for students (AMFEQ-S) based on the literature review on academic management. Each questionnaire has five sessions with different rating scales. As the first sessions are related to profile in both the questionnaires they contained open-ended and closed-ended questions. All remaining sessions are Likert scale items with three or five-point ratings. A group of experts individually validated the research tools. A pilot study was conducted for ensuring the validity of the tools.
- 2. Interview Schedules:** The researcher interviewed the Academic Heads at the NIFT campuses and at head office to understand the important issues, developmental challenges, innovative things done by them, suggestions for academic improvement, and future direction for NIFT. Total 50 schedules were planned and being conducted.

- 3. Focus Group Discussion:** Based on the quantitative base data compiled from the questionnaires, the important aspects were further probed through focus group study of students and teachers separately to obtain qualitative data. Total 20 FGDs were planned and executed.
- 4. Class Observations:** The researcher personally visited the four selected institutes to study the academic culture and students approaches in the classes and studies. Total 16 class observations were planned and conducted.
- 5. Document Analyses:** The researcher personally collected various documents published by NIFT and the Indian government in hard and soft forms to study the NIFT purpose, academic structure, planning and task responsibilities of academic heads. Further this secondary data was also used for constructing different themes, constructs and dimensions need to be focused on the study through data collection. The important documents used are Annual Reports, Academic Manual, Establishment manual, Account Manual, Admission Prospects, Citizen's/Client's Charter and Placement reports.

Necessary blanket approval has been requested from the Director General, NIFT. Head Office, Delhi. Based on the blanket approval received, NIFT campus wise permissions were sought from the respective Directors to collect the quantitative and qualitative data from the students, teachers and academic administrators.

## **9. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Mixed methodology was used to analyse the data, and it has been presented as per the objectives of the study. The data was collected during July 2017 to June 2018 by the personal visits of the researcher. A total of 402 students and 52 teachers responded resulting to 70.8% and 68.4% of yielded response respectively.

The survey data collected from the four NIFT campuses were compiled through Microsoft Excel and processed through SPSS software for computing frequencies. The obtained information was again rearranged through Microsoft Excel into frequency tables, stacked bar graphs and clustered column graphs. The researcher acted as a moderator for all the Focused Group Discussions. These are conducted in classrooms or studios by rearranging the tables and chairs in a circular pattern so that all participants face each other and discuss conveniently. Philips GoGear Mix instrument is used for audio recording of the discussions.

The audio recordings are transcribed by the researcher himself using Express Scribe - NCH free Software. The qualitative data compiled from focused group discussions and interviews were analysed by coding, classifying and finally presented in themes of respective research objectives. Class observations are also conducted by the researcher to support quantitative and qualitative data.

In the present study the purpose of the mixed method is mainly to Triangulation and Expansion, from various sources and means. Concurrently qualitative and quantitative data was almost given equal priority in the data analysis and interpretation. Theoretical lenses used for qualitative data was mainly implicit whereas for quantitative data it was explicit.

The present study mainly adopted Sequential Explanatory Design for data presentation. In the process to maintain the order and consistency similar format has been followed in presenting quantitative and qualitative data from different sources. Initially quantitative data obtained from students was presented followed by quantitative data from teachers. After quantitative data, findings of focused group discussions of students than focused group discussions and interviews of teachers were presented. Data of each aspect of the study was analysed separately and at the end of each session the identified interrelated findings were interpreted, articulated and presented.

## **10. IMPORTANT EMERGING FINDINGS**

Presently the researcher has been in the process of final analysis. The following tentative research findings are being emerged so far from the study.

1. The study found that over the years, fashion education has been exponentially grown across India in terms of its scale, rigour, novelty, and popularity. At the time of inception, Fashion design was the only diploma programme offered by the NIFT and now the number of programmes has been increased as a response to the needs and demands of all the stakeholders. Programmes such as Accessory Design and Fashion Communication were evolved as allied programmes to the core fashion education.
2. With respect to the composition of the students and teachers the study found that NIFT campuses admitting students from all streams (maths, sciences, commerce and arts etc.) and nurturing them as fashion professionals with a teacher team of various specializations including Fine arts, Design, Technology, Management, Mass communication, and Home

sciences. However 80% of the students are from maths and science streams. Majority of these students opined that because of Engineering and Medical programmes popularity, the family pressure and social beliefs most of them were compelled to take mathematics or science streams after tenth class despite their sketching and creative abilities, however their interest made them join fashion programmes at the graduation level. This shows the interdisciplinary characteristic of the fashion education.

3. The study found that NIFT was identified as a centre of excellence for catering to the needs of industry and other sectors of the economy by offering creative and innovative programmes both at bachelor and master degree levels. Introduction of doctoral programmes has been a step forward for promoting research culture in the institution. However, only 12% of the teacher sample has doctoral degrees. As opined by the teachers, special provisions need to be created to encourage them to pursue Ph.D. and continuously conducting research in fashion education.
4. The study found that majority of the students pursuing the fashion programmes are from urban brought up (75%) with English medium (95%) and aspiring to settle in overseas (50%) and residing in leased residences (44%) having mostly educated parents of graduation or post-graduation degrees (80%). This is indicating that particular cohorts of students are majorly pursuing these programmes.
5. The present study found that 79% of the students studying fashion education are female, 67% of the students pursuing fashion education due to the popularity of these programmes, 65% of students preferred Fashion Design or Fashion Communication as their first choice during the admissions of these programmes.
6. With regard to the profile of the teachers it was found from the study that the numbers of male and female teachers in the NIFT are almost equal. About 46% of teachers are from rural or semi-urban background, 28% of teachers completed their school education in regional languages, and 50% of them are first-time teachers in their family. Unlike the fashion education students the demography of the fashion education teachers is widespread in most of the above parameters.
7. It was found from the study that 34% of the teachers do not have any industrial experience, and for 30% teachers fashion education was not their first career choice. It was found that 16% of teachers are not fully aware of the institution's mission and objectives. In the context of the above findings majority of the academic administrators and teachers have opined that there should be an in build mechanism of regular induction,

mentoring and guidance to groom the teachers towards sensitizing the vision, mission, objectives and current priorities of the institution.

8. With respect to the indicators of academic administration; cordial relations 49%, adequate staff 40%, ease of administrative procedures 43% were found as perceived by the students. Whereas cordial relation 57%, adequate staff 51%, orientation to fashion education 69%, addressing students discipline 61% were found as perceived by the teachers. Majority of the teachers and students are of the opinion that the administrative personnel need to be more accountable, efficient and cordial in their work related areas to support the academic programmes at NIFT campuses.
9. Majority of the students perceived that the indicators of academic planning; support of administration 70%, availability of academic plans in time 73%, adherence to planned schedules 60%, fullest utilization of professional capabilities 65%, were found high importance in the programmes, whereas a majority of students found these indicators are moderate in practice.
10. Majority of the teachers holding one or other administrative responsibilities and are opined that mostly they are overloaded with these responsibilities, sometimes they have to leave their classes in-between to attend administrative issues. Few of such teacher opined that administration and academic workloads should be 20% and 80% in proportion whereas it is reverse in their practice. Teachers also opined that without any training and adequate competency they are compelled to take academic administrative responsibilities.
11. With respect to the indicators of curriculum design; the purpose of the programme 42%, regular revision of curriculum 37%, correct weightage of credits and course duration 38%, clear articulation of course objectives 40%, knowledge component 40%, skill component 45%, were found in the curriculum design as perceived by the students. Whereas majority of the teachers perceived that these indicators are high in practice. Certain topics in the curriculum were found repeated as opined the teachers and students leading to ambiguity and waste of time in the learning process.
12. It was found from the study that majority of the students perceived that, the indicators of curriculum design with respect to their importance and status; integration of design elements and principles 73%, application of design methodology 75%, trends and forecast 73%, group assignments 65%, interdisciplinary learning provisions 57%, craft integration 62%, were found high importance in the programmes, while majority of the students perceived these indicators are medium in practice. Whereas the teachers perceive that they are high in importance and also in practice.

13. The study revealed that the interdisciplinary alliance and collaboration among various departments need to be strengthened for developing an integrated and holistic curriculum, research and development. It was opined by a majority of the students and teachers that such an alliance would enhance the professional competencies, knowledge synthesis and new knowledge development, and entrepreneur development.
14. With respect to the indicators of curriculum transaction; conducive teaching-learning 42%, appropriate strategies 38%, active learning 35%, creative academic outputs 53%, and teacher passion towards teaching 35%, were perceived by students. Whereas most of the teachers perceived that the above indicators are high in practice. In order to improve the active participation of the industry, alumni, and also the teachers and students the academic autonomy of NIFT campuses need to be enhanced as perceived by the academic administrators and teachers. Such autonomy should lead the NIFT campuses to better recognise the local needs and indigenous practices to integrate in the curriculum transaction.
15. The study found that the students are overloaded with more number of assignments, on an average two in a week, leaving no time for creativity and innovation which are very essential aspects for fashion design programmes as opined by the students. It was also found that most of the assignments are predefined in the curriculum and have a narrow scope for interdisciplinary application. Some teachers have opined that assignments are too detailed and very structured with less scope for exploration.
16. The study found that the students' academic outputs in the fashion education are of different means; exams, presentations, displays, reports, virtual models, prototypes, products and juries with modes; spot, continues and assignment based; and are of different evaluation criteria; conceptual understanding, exploration, finishing, articulation, presentation etc. with a proportion of 60% internal evaluation by subject teacher and 40% external evaluation by other competent teacher/s
17. The study found that 77% of the students and 98% of the teachers are on the opinion that the use of modern classroom equipment has high importance, whereas 47% of students and 43% of teachers opined that it is moderate in practice. It was opined by the students that the existing facilities in the classrooms, studios and labs need to be upgraded with modern technological facilities.
18. The study found that the indicators of academic focus; creativity (51%), innovation (51%), capability (46%), self-confidence (36%), interdisciplinary knowledge (39%), teamwork (57%), autonomy (42%), critical abilities (43%), teacher availability (52%) and



self-reading habits (68%) were found in the pedagogy as perceived by the students. Whereas majority of the teachers perceive that they encourage all these aspects, except a minor portion of teachers; innovation (1%), teamwork (2%), critical abilities (6%), teacher availability (8%) and reading habits (4%) have disagreed on the indicators of academic focus.

19. The present study revealed that the various professional development requirements of teachers in the NIFT institution; industry exposure (71%), research methodology (71%), ICT proficiency (71%), international exposure (69%), and knowledge creation and dissemination (69%) are in high need as perceived by the teachers. Though the institution has policies pertaining to the faculty orientation and training, few teachers only availing these benefits, further probing into the matter it was found that the administrative procedures are complex.
20. It was found from the study that environmental and social concerns are the priority areas of fashion education in India and are integrated in the fashion design curriculum; however majority of the students and teachers have opined that they are sparsely practiced by them; teachers (environmental 42% and social 38%) and students (environmental 29% and social 31%).
21. With regard to the students approaches to learning as opined by the students that they are self-learners (79%), use e-resources (70%), learn more outside the classrooms (70%), depend on teachers assistance (22%), spend adequate time in the library (34%), regularly study class books (35%), refer books beyond curriculum (54%), , and consult other department teachers (36%), with an objective of professional development (77%) and focusing on long-term goals (77%).
22. The study revealed that activities related to academic culture; students and faculty welfare, knowledge sharing, appreciation for accomplishments, expert lecture were very important however they are moderately practiced in the NIFT institution as opined by the students and teachers.
23. The study found that the future challenges of NIFT related to the students admissions, grooming and development as per the opinion of the academic administrators, teachers and students are; enticing the right attitude and meritorious students, rigorous real-life exposure to the students through industry collaboration, meeting the international aspirations of the students, preparing students towards successful entrepreneurs, creating multiple career opportunities for students, development of specialized programmes of demand at Post Graduate and Doctoral level.

24. The study found that the future challenges of fashion education in India is to strengthen their academic quality and excellence as opined by academic administrators and teachers are; enhancing the faith, trust and values in fashion education practices, interdisciplinary and research culture among the students and teachers, involving the alumni as active stakeholders of the institution, knowledge management and dissemination.
25. The study found that the future challenges of Fashion Education in India in the areas of academic resources as opined by academic administrators, teachers and students are; developing and maintaining sustained IT infrastructure and supporting facilities, continuous professional development of teachers and staff, development of e-content on par with international standards, and assured career paths for teachers and staffs progression.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

In the field of higher education fashion education has been offering various bachelor design programmes including Fashion Design, Textile Design, Accessory Design, Fashion Communication, Leather Design, and Knitwear Design. They are very popular and many NIFT campuses are offering these programmes at different levels of education to fulfil the increasing demand of aspirant students. These programmes are vocational based and having wide spectrum of career opportunities including freelancing and self-employment development. Because of the complex and dynamic multidisciplinary nature of these programmes academic management has been always challenging. The present study described the academic management of the NIFT campuses in India. The findings were useful to various NIFT campuses to improve their educational practices through effective academic administration, curriculum design, curriculum transaction, students' evaluation and feedback, and resources development. Being a mixed methodology the study probed in to the various reasons their causes and implications in the academic management. The important indicators identified in the study are useful to fashion NIFT campuses to critically introspect and reflect on the present status of their education and developed. The compiled perceptions of students, teachers and academic administrators reflect the different viewpoints of important stakeholders and given the overall inherent picture of the fashion education in India. This study is useful to the students to understand various dimensions of learning process. This study is useful to teachers to understand various dimensions of teaching process. The study is useful to the academic administrators for effective management of the education.

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