

# STUDY ON DENIM AS A FASHION INSPIRATION IN BOLLYWOOD

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**ABSTRACT**-Fashion is ever evolving and that is the most beautiful aspect of it. Fashion fills the colour otherwise life is black and white. Bollywood has a similar effect and it goes hand-in hand with fashion. In India, Bollywood is the trendsetter in fashion even more than the runways or bridal shows. From 1970's to the present decade, fashion has evolved tremendously in the Indian film industry. Bollywood and fashion always had a vital relation, They have always influenced each other. In India, fashion often takes its cues from cinema. Indian Bollywood fashion in the 1970s underwent many changes in dressing, both for men and women, colors, styles, hairdos – everything evolved.

Several popular Hindi films from the 1970's used denim as more or less prominent appearance were typically signifiers of characters exploring new forms of identity. It is perhaps not entirely coincidental that denim came into Bollywood film just as the major tropes and themes of mainstream film shifted towards a focus on subaltern subjects and the pursuit of justice, and away from romance.

The consumerism in the 1980s and 1990s opened Indians to the idea of wearing readymade denims, as it survived 2k & till present day denimization took over people's wardrobe irrespective of gender & age.

**KEYWORDS:** *Denim, Bollywood, Fashion, Inspiration, Style*

## INTRODUCTION

The name 'denim' derives from the French *serge de Nîmes*, a fabric from the town of Nîmes in France. It was made of silk and wool, but denim has always been made of cotton. No other fabric has received such a wide acceptance as denim. It has been used extensively by people of all ages, classes and genders. It has been in use for over a century in the clothing industry. Denim is cotton warp-faced in which the weft passes under two or more warp threads. This twill weaving produces a diagonal ribbing that distinguishes it from cotton duck. Originating in India, it was known as *Dungaree*, before coming to be known as denim. From the seventeenth century to the till day, denim has been used for making trousers, upholstery and awnings; it is also considered as the fabric of hard work, expression of youth rebellion. The most common denim is indigo denim, in which the warp thread is dyed, while the weft thread is left white. Paul, R. (Ed.). (2015).

## HISTORY OF DENIM

"Founding father" of Levi Strauss & Co. in the United States, has played a important role in developing the denim jeans. The company was founded by Loeb Strauss, who was born in Bavaria, Germany in 1829. Along with his family members, he left Germany in 1847 and sailed to New York, where Loeb's half-brothers were in business selling wholesale dry goods. For a few years, Loeb worked for his brothers and he changed his name to Levi Strauss sometime around 1850. In 1853, he decided to reinvent his life and took an adventurous journey to San Francisco, a city enjoying the benefits of the recent gold rush, and started his own dry goods business. Levi Strauss Co. dominated the jeans market for a century-plus and became synonymous with blue jeans.

There are several songs celebrating jeans and even a Tamil movie called *Jeans* for which A.R.Rahman scored the music. There was a time in India in the 70s and 80s when the younger generation lusted after Levis, the last word in jeans. Shopping list for family returning from abroad always included jeans — preferably Levis. Rajghatta, C. (2012)

## DENIM IN INDIA

The Growth of denim apparel is driven by increasing acceptance of denim within India. Consumers, especially the youth, in cities beyond the metros and mini metros are exceptionally aspiration. They are increasingly accepting denim as a core apparel category to be worn as an everyday casual garment. Women in the smaller cities. who were once not comfortable with western clothing, now tend to combine denims with short Kurtis or tunics. Even middle-aged women are experimenting with denims across fits and styles. Rural India is also projected to contribute significantly to this growth as a consequence of the increased penetration. This growth is expected to be sustainable given the increasing income. Guagnani, Technopak, A., & Brahma, Technopak, K. P. (2014, January).

India is a big market with a lot of untapped potential for the denim industry despite the fact that the industry has been growing robustly over the past few years. For a majority of the Indian youth, denim is not just a casual wear, but more of a fashion

statement. Almost 85% of the market is dominated by men, with 10% contribution from the female segment and the kids segment contributing about 5% of the market. An overview of the Global and Indian Denim Market. (2016, October 17).

Theorists have associated the emergence of the action film and action heroes, chief among them the iconic star Amitabh Bachan, with social and political upheaval in India (Ganti 2004: 32-3; Prasad 1998). The star's jeans were visually central, of course, but he — like some of the minor characters or extras played by junior artists — could well be a lower class or socially marginal character (e.g., *Dharmendra* in denim jacket and jeans as the petty criminal turned hero of the iconic 1975 film, *Sholay*). Miller, D., & Woodward, S. (Eds.). (2011). *Global denim*. Berg

Looking to the importance of business of denim the company *Pantanjali*, an Indian FMCG major recently also plans to get into jeans and other items of clothing.

## METHODOLOGY

10 popular Indian movie of each decade from 1970 onwards were reviewed by the researcher to find out the uses of denim, among them 5 movies were selected in which denim and its variation were used by costume designer and set iconic fashion example for common people. Thus 25 Bollywood movie were critically assessed on the parameters of uses and promotion of denim in India.

## OBJECTIVES

- To study various changes in denim styles and trends in Indian film industry over decades from 1970's.
- To study denim product range available in market and prominent styles of denims in Bollywood

Bollywood is called the *mecca* of fashion and no matter what we all religiously follow are the fashion & styling trends from Bollywood. For decades Bollywood has been a sensational fashion and style inspiration and there are certain films that have created massive fashion trends, of which some are still followed, Be it college fashion or wedding, Bollywood films play a major role in every hardcore filmy person's life, So revisiting the Bollywood films that created fashion trends which made a huge impact on their fans in below mentioned Table 1:

**TABLE 1 : DETAILS OF SELECTED BOLLYWOOD FILMS HIGHLIGHTING DENIM GARMENTS**

Sr. No.	Year(decade wise)	Indian Movies: Titles	Costume/ Fashion Designer/Costume and Wardrobe Assistant:	Trend Description
1	1970's	Zanjeer	Vasant Mahajan, Shankar Jadhav	Denim jacket worn in Zanjeer by Amitabh Bachan. First time denim noticed by people and thinking to start follow.
2		Deewar	Shashikant Shellar	The denim blue shirt wore with khakee colored trousers and a rope lying over the shoulder is arguably Amitabh Bachchan's most iconic film look and the megastar reveals the styling in 'Deewar' was a result of a mistake by the tailor. "The knotted shirt and rope on shoulder in 'Deewar' was an adjustment for an error in stitching and shirt too long so knotted it,"
3		Sholay	Stephen Desouza, dressman, Babu Ghanekar, costumes assistant, Shalini Shah, costumes, Vithal Thorat, costumes assistant	In 1975 Again denim jacket worn by Dharmendra, as Sholay went on to become a big hit, star struck men across India asked their tailors to get similar denims stitched, or approach their relatives to get them from abroad.
4		Hare Rama , Hare Krishna	Dev Anand	It was a land mark movie and hippy style brought by Zeenat Aman in India and she did complete justice with the costume in the movie Hare Rama Hare Krishna, set style statement in particular song being "Hare Rama Hare Krishna" she wore denim trousers and denim jacket too.
5		Bobby	Bhanu Athaiya	Dimple Kapadia wore denim skirt with polka dot top.
6	1980's	Karz	Bhanu Athaiya	In this movie again Rishi Kapoor wore denim Shirt over a white Shirt.
7		Mr. india	Sunita Kapoor	Anil Kapoor wore denim trousers which was medium fit, not flared.
8		Khoon bhari maang	Abu Jani, Sandeep Khosla and Leena Daru	This movie is remake of Australian mini-series "Return to Eden" and now a day's denim's popularity increase and wore by actresses too.
9		Maine pyar Kiya	Sabina Khan	High waisted denim trouser wore by Salman Khan and Movie gave fashion statement to youth.
10		Chandni	Neeta Lula	Sridevi wore high waisted denim.
11	1990's	Andaj Apna Apna,	Anna Singh, Manish Malhotra, Ashley Rebello	Karishma Kapoor wore denim high waist trousers with denim half jacket and gave style statement as denim on denim
12		Jo jeeta wohi sikandar,	Ashley Rebello	Female Denim shirt again was in trend as Ayesha Jhulka Wore in this movie
13		Rangeela	Manish Malhotra, Shaheed Amir	Urmila Matondkar wore loose denim shirt with two pocket tied over waist and carried with colourful red trousers.
14		Dil to pagal Hain,	Neeta Lula	Denim flaunted by Bollywood star very frequently. Shahrukh Khan and Karishma Kapoor wore denim trousers.

15		Kuch Kuch Hota Hain,	Manish Malhotra	This movie brought huge denim collection among youth like denim jump suit, Denim jacket, denim shirt, denim trouser etc. and acquainted people about International Brands.
16	2000's	Dil chahta Hain,	Arjun Bhasin	Amir Khan, Preity zinta wore denim trousers styled differently then High waist ones.
17		Rock on	Niharika Khan	Farhan Akhtar gave style statement by wear denim trouser with casual T-shirt's.
18		Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gam	Manish Malhotra	Manish Malhotra flaunted denims heavily in this movie and Kareena Kapoor and Hrithik Roshan wore denim styled in a unique way.
19		Wake up sid	Raghuveer Shetty	Ranbir Kapoor wore denim jeans with casual look.
20		Aisha	Pernia Qureshi	Considered to be india's first fashion movie, introduced international brands through this movie e.g. Dior
21	2010's onwards-Till date	Purani Jeans	Moiz Kapadia, Dipti Mhatre	In this movie producer compared friendship with jeans and said, "friendship is like a pair of old jeans- the older it gets, the better it becomes".
22		Chennai Express	Manish Malhotra	Shahrukh Khan wore denim jacket and denim trousers very well.
23		Cocktail	Anaita Shroff Adajania,	Saif Ali Khan wore Denim trouser with half sleeve shirt and casual t-shirt in a relaxed way. Deepika padukone carried ripped denim very well and style of deepika followed by huge number of college girls.
24		Yeah Jawani Hain diwani,	Manish Malhotra	Deepika wore denim short in (Balam Pichkari song ) which became the first choice of college going girls even till date.
25		Veerey di wedding	Abu Jani, Sandeep Khosla and Rhea Kapoor	In this movie denim worn over indian traditional costume Ghaghara choli and gave new style statement.

As it is visible from above mentioned table that the fashion that started in early 70's by new explorations involving denim by designers became quite popular though initially it started by copying Hollywood trends but as the time passed by creativity levels improved, it justified the power of dress / costumes in movies significantly, it can be said that denim styles not only gave popularity to male & female actors in the movie but designers also received recognition & respect for this profession & related job demands have taken a leap too, "*Bhanu Athaiya*" is the best example who even won Oscar for her work.

Since late 1970's lot of women started wearing denim as a style statement to keep up with the ongoing latest trends.

## DECADEWISE BOLLYWOOD FASHION HIGHLIGHTING DENIM GARMENTS

### Indian Bollywood Fashion: 1970's

Fashion was fast evolving during the 1970s. Denim shirts and flared pants were in vogue for men during this period. This was the era where the womenswear started being inspired by menswear – borrowing elements like flared pants and buttoned shirts.

**Indian Bollywood Fashion: 1980's:** The transition from the unpredictable 70s to the expressive 80s was smooth, fashionable and stylish. This decade exhibited rugged denims and biker jackets made famous by "*Maine Pyar Kiya*'s", *Salman Khan* made their way into every man's wardrobe.

### Indian Bollywood Fashion: 1990's

The Indian films in 1990s focused on fashion like those in any other decade. The first half of 90s was all about ethnic-wear – long sleeves and sheer dupattas with short blouses. During the later half of the decade, things toned down with crop tops, shorts, off-shoulder, halter necks and denim overalls. Movies like "*KuchKuchHota Hai*" and "*DilToPagal Hai*" introduced the new trend of sportswear which became acceptable as casual day-time clothing. The 90's Bollywood fashion has been responsible for some of the latest western fashion trends in India that are prevalent even in this decade.

### Indian Bollywood Fashion: 2000's

Shifting from chiffon saris to the girl-next-door tees and jeans, the nineties focused on draped garments and latest dresses. Bollywood fashion became all about crop tops, bikinis, tees paired with palazzos, shorts and micro-minis.

### Indian Bollywood Fashion: 2010's

From shorts or skirts to strapless gowns, this decade is witnessing the introduction of bold fashion statement. Bold printed crops tops, casualshirts and mini-dresses are very trendy in this era. While movies like "*Zindagi Na MilegiDobara*" made boho-dresses and chic Bollywood tops with the vacation mood popular. Aggarwal, A. (2014).

## PROMINENT DENIM STYLES WORN BY CELEBRITIES OF BOLLYWOOD

**Jacket:** Denim jacket gave iconic fashion statement to youth specially.

**Male:** In 1970's "*Amitabh Bachan*" wore four pocket denim jacket in "*Zanjeer*" movie and set major fashion goals. In 1970's "*Dhramendra*" in "*Sholay*" movie wore denim jacket and style flaunt by youth and after that lots of celebrity experimented with denim jacket.

**Female:** In 1990's "*KuchKuchhotahai*" movie half denim jacket wore by "*Kajol*" and set style statement for college girl. Denim Jacket wore by "*SwaraBhaskar*" in "*Veere Di Wedding*" over "*choli*" an indian blouse top gave new style idea to youth and set best example of Indo western.

**Denim “Saree”:** Denim sarees are not worn in particular movie but “Sonam Kapoor” wore denim “saree” (Ready to wear) in an event in 2017 and said style was slowly picked up & flaunted by youth. In fashion shows Denim Skirt and “choli” an indian blouse is new concept.

**Denim Mini skirt:** Denim Skirt wore by “Dimple Kapadia” in “Bobby” movie and carried with polka dots top and it was very first time denim skirt noticed and followed by other celebrities as well.

**Ripped Jeans:** Male: In 1990’s ripped jeans worn by “Salman Khan” in “PyarKiyatohdarnakya” and song title “O Ojaanejaana” was quite popular because of SalmanKhan dressing style and followed by college guys madly.

Female: 21<sup>st</sup> Century “Dear Zindgi” movie actress “Alia Bhatt” carried denim ripped jeans quiet gracefully.

**High Waist jeans:** Male: “Salman Khan” set iconic fashion trend by wore high waist jeans in “Maine Pyaarkiya”.

Female: In 1990’s High waist jeans fashion was at its peak and no one was better than “Karishma Kapoor” in movie “AndazApnaApna” in carrying high waist denim with denim shirt and set style statement.

#### Denim Shirt:

**Female:** Urmila Mantodkar in “Rangeela” became an inspiration for the 90s college going girls. She brought the trend of denim shirt with two pocket gave sporty vibes and could be paired with colored pants, denim, skirts. Denim shirts are still popular and a big hit among the younger crowd.

**Male:** Faded Denim shirt was worn by “Farhan Akhtar” in “ZindgiMileginaDobara” same was flaunted everywhere and blindly followed by Youth.

#### Denim Shorts:

**Female:** “Karishma Kapoor” wore denim high waist shorts in 1990’s and broke away from the stereotypes and wore short and sexy dresses on screen, other prominent short denim statement was given by DeepikaPadukone in “Ye Jwaani Hai Deewani”.

**Male:** Denim shorts worn by Bollywood celebrities commonly e.g “Farhan Akhtar” and “Ranbirsingh” wore denim short as a street style.

#### Denim Dungrees:

**Male:** In 1970’s “Raj Kapoor” wore denim dungree in “MeraNaamJocker” and “Salman Khan” too wore denim dungree in “PyarKiyatohdarna Kya” and set a style statement.

**Female:** Most prominent dungaree style (Short and long) in “KuchKuchhotahai” wore by Kajol in 1990’s and became popular among youth. “KangnaRana” too wore dungaree as street style.

#### Denim on Denim:

Denim on Denim are in trend and wore by both male and female.

**Male:** Actors i.e. “Varun Dhavan” “Hrithik Roshan” wore denim on denim garment as a street style too.

**Female:** Actress “Anushka Sharma”, “Priyanka Chopra” also wear denim on denim as a street style. Prachi Desai’s wore really rocking street style with her denim on denim look.

#### Mom jeans:

Women’s jeans of a style regarded as unfashionable or unflattering is called mom jeans. Mom Jeans is also wear by Bollywood celebrity like “Karina Kapoor” and “DeepikaPadukone”. It was quite popular in 1990’s and again in trend in present seasons.

**TABLE 2: CATEGORYWISE DESCRIPTION OF DENIM GARMENTS**

S. No.	Denim Garment Category	Description of Garments
<b>Upper wear</b>		
1	Shirt/Top	Shirt is a cloth garment for the upper body and denim shirt wore by Bollywood actor and actresses frequently now a days.
2	Jacket	Jackets are also made from denim, it has been a popular type of casual apparel with both men and women.
3	Waistcoat	Denim waistcoat is a sleeveless upper-body garment. It is usually worn over a dress shirt and necktie and below a coat as a part of most men's formal wear. It is also sported as the third piece in the traditional three-piece male lounge suit and quite popular among male, female and kids.
4	Dungaree	It is basically a overall garment and a pair of trousers with an extra piece of cloth that covers the chest and is held in place by a strap over each shoulder.
5	Kurta	Kurta is an upper garment for men and women, originating in the Indian subcontinent and denim kurta flaunt everywhere.
6	Crop Top	Crop Top is basically a short-sleeved garment or undergarment for the upper body, cut short so that it reveals the stomach intentionally.
7	Blouse	Blouse word most commonly refers to a girl's or woman's dress shirt and it is a loose fitting upper garment, denim blouses are in trend.
8	Sheath Dress	Sheath dress is a fitted, straight cut dress, often nipped at the waistline with no waist seam and denim sheath is quite popular among celebrities and common people too
9	Jumpsuits	A jumpsuit is a one-piece garment with sleeves and legs and typically without integral coverings for feet, hands or



		head. Short and long jumpsuits are in trend.
<b>Bottoms</b>		
1	Jeans	Jeans are a type of trousers, typically made from denim. Often the term "jeans" refers to a particular style of trousers, This versatility, the ability to become all things to all people, is the secret to jeans' survival as clothing staple. This fabric can mould itself in any form to suit personality and can be worn in a variety of ways.
2	Jeggings	Tight-fitting trousers for women, it has good stretch and styled to resemble a pair of denim jeans. Jeggings are comfortable and popular among female now days.
3	Capri	Capri pant is three quarter pants and denim quarter pant usually wore by youth.
4	Skirt	A skirt is the lower part of a dress or gown, covering the person from the waist downwards, or a separate outer garment serving this purpose.
5	Shorts	Denim shorts are worn by both genders. They can also be called "jorts", a combination of "jeans" and "shorts," although this term is arguably applied to knee-length baggy styles.
<b>Accessories</b>		
1	Footwear	Various types of denim footwear like Sneakers, Loafer, ballerina and boots are in trend.
2	Cap/Hat	It is a form of headgear, Caps have crowns that fit very close to the head.
4	Jewelry	Jewellery like earring, headband, necklace made with denim are popular specially among youth
5	Belt	Belt happens to be a strip of leather or other material worn, typically round the waist, to support or hold in clothes, Denim belts too popular and presently very much in trend.
6	Handbags	A small bag used by a woman to carry everyday personal items, Denim bags like totes, sling bag, backpack, laptop bag etc.

As it is visible from above table that denim has become an integral part of various apparel categories, many fads come & go but denim till date due to it's various characteristics is still considered as a famed product & it has indeed become an eternal classic garment for wardrobes across genders, Now denim has become so much popular that even in ethnic & bridal wear categories, designers have started creating new lines due to increasing customer demand.

#### SUGGESTIONS & SCOPE FOR FUTURE STUDY

Denim is one of the few long-sustaining imports of the western world to India. While elsewhere in the world, it found takers as work wear, denim in India started as a youth story, as the youth found it to be fashionable and comfortable, and gave it the necessary style quotient. Keeping in tune with the times, brands are now offering innovative products to market their products , Researchers can surely study new developments which are being highlighted through Bollywood& can analyze related consumer behavior aspects when said new developments are mass produced for common people .

#### CONCLUSION

Researchers would like to conclude that Denim indeed over a period of time since 1970's have become essential part of celebrities wardrobe in Bollywood, though fads have come and gone but due to the mystical nature of denim lot of explorations happened in passed by decades & time to come , because of it's characteristics it keeps creative designers on toes with a urge to create new things always , Let's look forward for more exciting innovations in denim in future.

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