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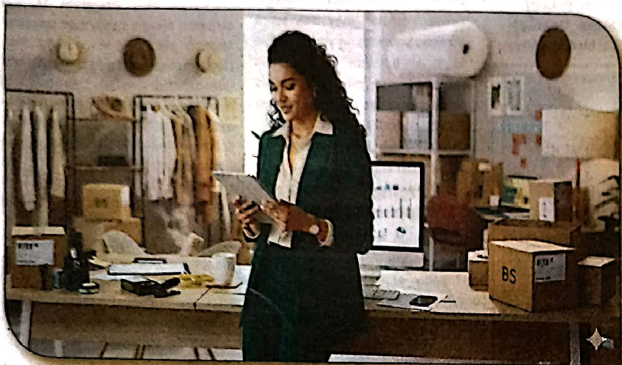
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From Runway to Retail

Careers in India's Thriving Apparel Sector



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India's fashion and apparel industry stands as one of the most strategically important sectors of the economy, combining cultural heritage with global competitiveness. The textiles and apparel sector contributes around 2.3% to India's GDP, accounts for nearly 13% of industrial production, and makes up about 12% of the country's total exports. The industry directly employs over 45 million people, making it one of India's largest employment generators, particularly within MSME and craft-based clusters.

India's overall textile and apparel market is valued at approximately USD 179 billion, comprising a strong domestic market alongside exports of about USD 37 billion. On the global stage, India ranks among the top six exporters of textiles and apparel worldwide, holding close to 3.9% of global trade share, reinforcing the country's role as a critical sourcing and manufacturing hub for international fashion brands.

What is especially significant for students and professionals is the structural transformation underway. Government policy initiatives, rapid growth in organised retail, e-commerce, luxury consumption, and technology-driven supply chains, and increasing global demand for sustainable and ethically produced fashion are reshaping how fashion businesses operate. This shift has created an urgent demand for professionals who can translate creativity into commercial success—individuals trained not only in fashion aesthetics, but in management, analytics, branding, and strategic decision-making.

It is within this high-growth, globally connected landscape that Fashion Management has emerged as a critical career pathway. Programmes offered by institutions such as NIFT's Department of Fashion Management Studies (DFMS) and leading private universities are designed to produce professionals capable of leading fashion enterprises, managing complex retail ecosystems, and building globally competitive Indian brands—making fashion management one of the most future-ready careers in the creative economy today.

Understanding Fashion Management

Fashion Management is the discipline that ensures fashion creations do more

than just look appealing—they reach the right consumer, at the right time, and at the right price, while remaining profitable. It spans the entire lifecycle of a fashion product, from understanding consumer behaviour and market trends to overseeing sourcing, branding, marketing, retail, and business growth. Success in this field requires a unique blend of creative insight, strategic thinking, business acumen, and analytical ability, enabling professionals to make decisions that balance innovation with commercial viability. Those who thrive in fashion management are able to translate design and ideas into tangible business outcomes, navigating a fast-paced, dynamic, and increasingly global industry.

Career Opportunities/Job Roles

Graduates of fashion management programmes can explore a wide spectrum of roles across the fashion value chain:

- **Fashion & Retail Manager:** Manage store operations, category performance, customer experience, and sales strategy across physical and digital formats.
- **Brand Manager:** Build and position fashion brands through marketing campaigns, storytelling, consumer engagement, and consistent brand identity.
- **Merchandiser (Retail / Export):** Handle product planning, pricing, buyer coordination, sales analysis, and inventory management for domestic and global markets.
- **Luxury Brand Consultant:** Work with premium and luxury brands to enhance customer experience, brand communication, and global retail standards.
- **Supply Chain & Sourcing Strategist:** Oversee vendor management, cost optimisation, sustainability initiatives, and timely production in fast-moving fashion cycles.
- **E-commerce & Omnichannel Specialist:** Drive online merchandising, digital sales performance, data-led decision-making, and seamless integration between online and offline retail.
- **Trend Analyst & Fashion Forecaster:** Study consumer behaviour, market trends, and data insights to guide future collections and business strategies.
- **Fashion Entrepreneur:** Launch and scale independent labels, retail ventures,

consulting firms, or fashion-tech startups.

With experience, professionals often move into senior leadership roles such as Category Head, Retail Director, Vice President of Retail, or Head of Brand Strategy, shaping business direction, expansion, and long-term growth of fashion organisations.

Is Fashion Management the Right Choice for You?

If you love fashion but don't see yourself only sketching designs, Fashion Management could be exactly where you belong. This field is perfect for students who are excited by the business behind the glamour—those who enjoy planning, problem-solving, and making strategic decisions that turn creative ideas into successful brands. You'll thrive in fashion management if you:

- Want to blend creativity with business and analytics
- Are curious about consumer behaviour, trends, branding, and numbers
- Dream of working with global fashion brands, international markets, or luxury labels
- Aspire to lead fashion businesses, manage brands, or launch your own venture

With India's fashion industry expanding rapidly and global demand for skilled fashion professionals rising, this is not just an exciting career—it's a future-ready one. Fashion management offers visibility, growth, leadership opportunities, and the chance to shape how fashion is created, sold, and experienced. If you want a career that is dynamic, influential, and truly global, fashion management is a smart and rewarding choice.

Fashion Management: A Career for Every Stream

Fashion Management is not just for designers—it is for anyone who wants to turn creativity into business success. Students from Arts, Science, and Commerce backgrounds bring unique strengths to the table, and the pathways into the field can be tailored accordingly.

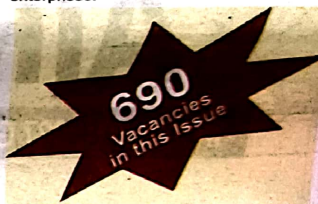
If you're an Arts or Humanities student, your strengths are creativity, cultural awareness, and storytelling. This makes you perfect for roles in brand management, merchandising, luxury consulting, marketing, or launching your own fashion venture. The ideal courses for you are Undergraduate BBA/B.A in Fashion Business or Fashion & Lifestyle Management, followed by a Postgraduate Masters in Fashion Management or MBA in Fashion Management. Admissions usually require your 10+2 or bachelor's degree, and some programmes include aptitude tests or interviews.

If you come from a Science or Engineering background, your analytical thinking, problem-solving, and technical skills are your biggest assets. You'll thrive in trend analysis, supply chain management, e-commerce, fashion analytics, or fashion-tech roles. Your pathway typically starts with a BBA in Fashion Business or Retail

Management, moving to Postgraduate programmes like MFM, MBA in Fashion Management, or fashion-tech focused courses.

For Commerce students, your business acumen, knowledge of marketing, finance, and strategy gives you a head start. You are well-suited for retail management, brand management, merchandising, luxury consulting, or entrepreneurship. The best courses include Undergraduate BBA in Fashion Business or Management, followed by MFM or MBA in Fashion Management.

No matter your stream, Fashion Management allows you to combine your strengths with practical experience and industry knowledge to pursue roles such as brand manager, retail head, trend analyst, e-commerce specialist, luxury consultant, or entrepreneur. With time and experience, you can move into senior leadership roles, shaping the growth and strategy of fashion enterprises.



Top Fashion Management Institutions and Alternative Routes

Here's an indicative list of institutes in India that offer courses focused on Fashion Management, Fashion Business, or related areas — including Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Diploma, and specialised programmes:

Top Institutions with Fashion Management & Fashion Business Programmes

- **National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT)**— Multiple campuses across India (e.g., New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, etc.) — well established programmes including Master of Fashion Management (MFM) and related courses that combine fashion with business strategy.
- **SVPISTM, Coimbatore** offers UG and MBA programmes in textiles, apparel, retail, and fashion business, combining technical knowledge with management skills.
- **Pearl Academy** — Campuses in Delhi, Mumbai, Jaipur offering UG and PG programmes in Fashion & Lifestyle Business Management and related management courses.
- **International Institute of Fashion Design (IIFD)** — New Delhi — offers BBA & MBA fashion business management programmes focused on marketing.

Continued on page 2

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