Women librarians in traditional and modern attires in India: Nationwide scenario

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Abstract:

India is a country located in southern Asia. With a population of over 1.3 billion people, in 29 states and 7 union territories, India is the most populous democracy in the world. Every state has unique traditional clothes that women wear. However there are three prominent types of clothes worn by women in India i.e. Sari, Salwar Kameez and Kurti. Over time, the sense of dressing has evolved and changed. Due to factors like globalisation and westernisation, today's women take a modern approach when it comes to dress. The paper focused on female librarians' clothing in India. The survey was conducted by inviting women librarians in every state to give their opinions about today's clothing styles and their preferences of clothes for daily use and for special occasions such as conferences/ workshops/meetings, etc. The study also explored piercing and tattooing styles and their preferences, and use of jewellery by women library professionals. It was found that Salwar Kameez, Chudidar/Kurta and Saree were most preferred on weekdays, similar outfits were preferred on weekends or Saturdays including Kurti with jeans. Almost all feel comfortable and confident in the outfits they commonly wear. Respondents select outfits considering their profession and status. The majority felt that clothing/outfits have the influence on approachability of students/library users. Jewellery and other accessories were preferred by a moderate number of respondents whereas tattooing practice was totally absent. In case of stereotyping of librarians, respondents felt that librarians have had not been stereotyped in media as far as Indian media is concerned.

Keywords: Women librarians, India, Outfits, Clothing, Tattooing, Jewellery and other accessories, Stereotype, Grooming, Indian traditional outfits

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Ethnic clothing is just one of the things that distinguish India from the westerners. Clothing is a vital form of expression in India, with full of colours, motifs, patterns etc. A clothing style change in India not only state wise but also religion/custom/traditions and climate-wise too. There are cultural beliefs attached to it.

History of Indian women's clothing

The history of women's outfits is evident from Indus valley civilization. Then women draped a Saree (Sari) without a blouse, but adorned themselves with metal and bead jewellery and styled their long hair in plaits or a bun ornamented with fresh flowers. Moving ahead in the dynastic time women draped their saree over a bustier-angavastram, hair continued to be long and beautifully ornamented, jewellery became a mark of socio-economic status. Further, as time passed by and the Moghuls invaded India and made it their home. The saree worn by the Indian Hindu women became a sign of their religious affiliation. Simultaneously the innovation of pattern cutting and sewing, along with a sense of modesty led to Hindu women wearing a hand-stitched Choli (Blouse) and covering their head with a Veil- Ghunghat. While these cultural changes continued in all aspects of life, the Europeans - Portuguese, English, Dutch & French came to India for trade and later formed colonies along coastal India.

In the 15th Century Muslim and Hindu women wore different outfits and the influence of the Mughal empire was decisive (Ranavaade, 2017). The traditional Salwar-Kurta or the Salwar-Kameez was the result of the practice followed by Muslim women to wear divided garments during the Mughal period. This dress has survived to this day and has a variant called 'Chudidar (Churidaar/Chooridaar)' in which the salwar is replaced by the 'Chudidar' a tapering pant with folds at the bottom.

The Saree is one Indian dress that enjoys worldwide popularity. A sari is a strip of unstitched cloth, ranging from four to nine meters in length that is draped over the body in various styles. Different regions of India have different specialty and variety of sarees. Though there are several varieties, the famous ones are Chanderi, Maheshwari, Banarsi saree (which have brocade work), Paithan in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra state has kept alive the 2000-year old traditional method of weaving Paithani sarees using pure gold threads and yarns of silk. The other types of sarees are Andhra Pradesh's Pochampally saree or Pochampalli Ikat, in which skillful weavers create geometric patterns in silk, Assam is home to rich golden colored Muga silk, the finest of India's wild silk sarees. Kanjivaram and Patola are also the finest silk sarees in India. In Kerala, white saris with golden border, are known as Kavanis and are worn on special occasions. A simple white sari, worn as a daily wear, is called a Mundu.

About Kashmiri dresses, the 'Pheran' a loose woolen gown which is worn by both men and women to beat the freezing temperatures of the region. It has minute embroidery around the neck and the edges.

North east women wear motif-rich 'Mekhela Chador'- the traditional dress worn in the state of Assam. This dress is made from Muga silk and consists of a skirt-like lower part. Again a north-eastern dress is the 'Puanchei' of Mizoram, which is paired with the 'Kawrechi' blouse that contains colourful designs and patterns (Indian clothing, n.d.).

Contemporary outfits and accessories popular among women in India

One of the prominent outfits women wear in India is Salwar kameez. The salwar kameez has become the most popular dress for females. It consists of loose trousers (the salwar) narrow at the ankles, topped by a tunic top (the kameez). Women generally wear a Dupatta or Odani (Veil) with salwar kameez to cover their head and shoulders. It is always worn with a scarf called a Dupatta, which is used to cover the head and drawn over the bosom.

Chudidar is a variation on the salwar, loose above the knees and tightly fitted to the calf below. The chudidar can be worn with any upper garment such as a long kurta, which goes below the knees, or as part of the anarkali suit. The anarkali suit is made up of a long, frock-style top and features a slim fitted bottom.

Kurti or kurtis is blend of both traditional as well as western wear. A typical kurti is like a long shirt and falls around between one's waistline and knees. Kurtis is the most comfortable attire one can wear with any type of pants like harem pants, jeggings, leggings (called as Indian jeans), palazzos etc. Kurtis come in short as well as long type. Indian designers have modified Kurtis which has taken a new form called Indio-Western outfits. Indian fashion has undergone significant transformation through the decades but not been as drastic as compared to its western counterparts, owing to various traditional beliefs and values still held by most Indian women. Nevertheless, with changing times, even the most traditional apparels have been modified to hold an urban look without compromising on tradition (Shroff, 2017).

Figure no. 1: Indian women in various clothing style

Tattoos have been around in India since ancient times. The practice of tattooing as a cultural symbol is followed in many of the tribes in India as well as general Hindu population. Over the ages, the Indian body art has undergone a great transformation – from tattooing for beauty and tradition to tattooing for fashion and beliefs (Pal, 2016).

Bindi (red dot on forehead), Bangles, Anklets, Nose ring and Earrings are the accessories Indian women wear that adds grace and beauty to them. It is adorned by both married and unmarried women in India. Mangalsutra (Black beads) is a very auspicious accessory worn by a married Indian woman in some parts of India. But due to modernization, hectic work-life balance, changing the family structure, rebellion against customs and traditions the concept of wearing Mangalsutra, putting Bindi, Tattooing, Ear/Nose piercing is fading away.

Women Librarians in India
Clothing styles are different in different types of library set ups such as school library, college/university library, and corporate library. Again if the five-day working pattern is followed then on Fridays casual outfits like jeans and kurtis are worn by some women in corporate libraries but not generally in academic libraries. No protocol or written documents regarding dress has been identified for librarians. Dress habits are influenced by local culture, tradition, and climate. The culture of the institution plays important role in the dress code followed generally by librarians. It has been observed that female librarians, especially in metro cities, are more concerned about their image through outfit selection, jewellery, etc. Librarians come in contact with students, fellow professionals, higher authorities, administrators and their dressing has an impact on them.

In India, librarians have been stereotyped in media to a little extent or discussed very rarely in media not as compared with the way they have had mentioned in the foreign studies. In case of stereotyping Indian librarians, hardly any television commercials characterizing librarians have been publicized. In case of Indian movies, there were a few movies in the past in which a librarian character been shown in the background such as Khiladi, 3 Idiots, Lage raho munna bhai, Golmaal 3 etc. But again the way librarians are stereotyped in literature have not been found exactly in case of Indian media/cinemas as they were shown as a male librarian with mostly specs and shushing.

Review of literature
The literature on women librarians and their fashion is almost non-existent or can be said that it is mostly ignored issue. There is an abundance of literature on Indian women's fashion and clothing, marketing, import/export, trends, Indo western outfits, Influence of Bollywood on clothing, self-esteem and fashion clothing etc. Again there are plenty of studies on women librarians, work motivation, satisfaction, and information seeking available in the Indian context. But librarians, their outfits and appearance, grooming is rarely discussed in the literature.

There were a few articles that helped in understanding the history of Indian women's outfits/apparel. One Ph.D. study by Ranavaade (2017) analyzed and interpreted the semiotics of the sari/saree for trend mapping and study its role in the Indian fashion system. She concluded that more Indian women were likely to wear sari only for the festive and formal occasions, these festive saris will continue to be dressier and elaborate compared to daily wear or work wear sari. Women shall continue to buy and gift saris during the festivals and wedding season.

A few blogs by the librarians were very useful giving ideas about the librarians fashion in western countries and their thoughts about stereotyping of librarians such as

> http://whatthelibrarianwore.tumblr.com, http://librarianwardrobe.com/,
> http://librarianstyle.com,
> http://www.rosythereviewer.com/2015/01/librarian-fashion.html

There are numerous writings in the LIS literature regarding stereotyping of librarians. Majid & Haider (2008) investigated perceptions and stereotypes associated with the library and information profession and to determine whether the public image of library professionals has improved with the extensive use of ICT. It was found that library users in Singapore do not have a flattering image of librarianship and perceived the status of librarians to be low as compared to certain other professions. Keer & Carlos (2015) discussed the history of librarianship from stereotype point of view. According to authors from early 1900 librarians have observed and commented on their public perceptions. Over the last 10–15 years, this interest in librarian stereotypes, especially those concerning fashion, sexuality, and subcultural membership, has only increased. They concluded with the solution that the most effective way to combat the negative effects of librarian stereotypes is to work diligently towards social justice for marginalized groups. Similarly, Roggau (2006) argued that the changes produced by globalization, new technologies, the demands of the information society, among other factors, prompted a series of paradigmatic changes in the profession. Professionals from all over the world have assumed this new challenge and are positioning themselves favourably in this environment; surely that profile, in line with current requirements, will impact the public and allow you to compare and rethink the traditional

image. One article 'Should the ALA tell you how to dress? (2013) written by so-called 'Annoyed Librarian´ totally refused professional dress code for the librarians if there would be recommended by American Library Association and many other librarians even noted their regret about not to accept the dress code in the comment section of the article.

Balling, Henrichsen & Skouvig (2008) discussed the stereotype of the librarian and pointed to the fact that changing the public view of the librarian requires more than just talking about it. Librarians themselves need to take action. A way to change the image of the librarian could be a new form for reading groups: digital reading groups initiated by libraries. Shaffer and Casey (2014) examined the portrayals of librarians in world cinema whereas Luthmann (2007) examined images of librarians presented by professional literature, mass media, and popular culture. The findings showed that not all of the images that are being stereotyped are necessarily bad.

Objectives

The purpose of this study was to explore how Indian women librarians perceive fashion and implicate in their day to day professional life. The objectives were as follows:

- To know the opinions about today's clothing styles and their preferences of clothes for daily use and for special occasions such as conferences/ workshops/meetings, etc
- To explore body piercing and tattooing styles and their preferences
- To find out whether clothing styles differ from the type of libraries they serve
- To know the use of fashion accessories like Ornaments, Bangles/Bracelets at the workplace
- To find out their views about fashion, accessories, tattooing, body piercing and their effect on approachability of students

Research Methods

The descriptive survey research design was used, with a structured web questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was consisted of 28 questions, out of which, 25 were closed and three were open-ended questions. The questionnaire was sent to five librarians for pilot testing. There were suggestions received from four librarians as follows:

The first suggestion was in case of question where they were asked about ornaments/jewellery they wear, it was suggested to categorise like gold/silver/costume jewellery. The second suggestion was to add one more choice i.e. M.Phil. in LIS in case of education of participants. The third suggestion was to add following question: Does the management of your institution impose certain rules regarding outfits? The fourth suggestion was in case of the question about Bindi and Mangalsutra, these are worn by especially Hindu Indian women, then what about other women like Muslim, Christen and their preference so one more option was added: Any other symbol please specify in the comment box.

Approximately 1500 email ids were found from various sources like national association directories, conference participants' lists, national portals, and university/college/school/institutes websites. The questionnaire was prepared by using survey monkey.com. The link was forwarded to all participants. About 350 emails were bounced back. About 240 responded to the questionnaire, 2 were invalid so making total response 238.

## Limitations of data collection and representation

There is no exhaustive list of women librarians in India. The researcher had to visit websites of universities, college, school, corporate, special libraries to know first the gender of

librarians and then collected their email ids accordingly. University Grant Commission (UGC) website was used to locate names of colleges and universities in India. Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) website, as well as various Indian ministry websites, were used to compile the list of special librarians. The researcher had contacted and visited many library association websites to locate female librarians. Even conference proceedings, Indian LIS journals were referred. Friends of the researcher, residing in various Indian states also helped in collecting and contacting the librarians in respective states. Due to lack of time researcher could not locate more female librarians.

Findings

Geographic distribution
Figure no. 2: State/union territory
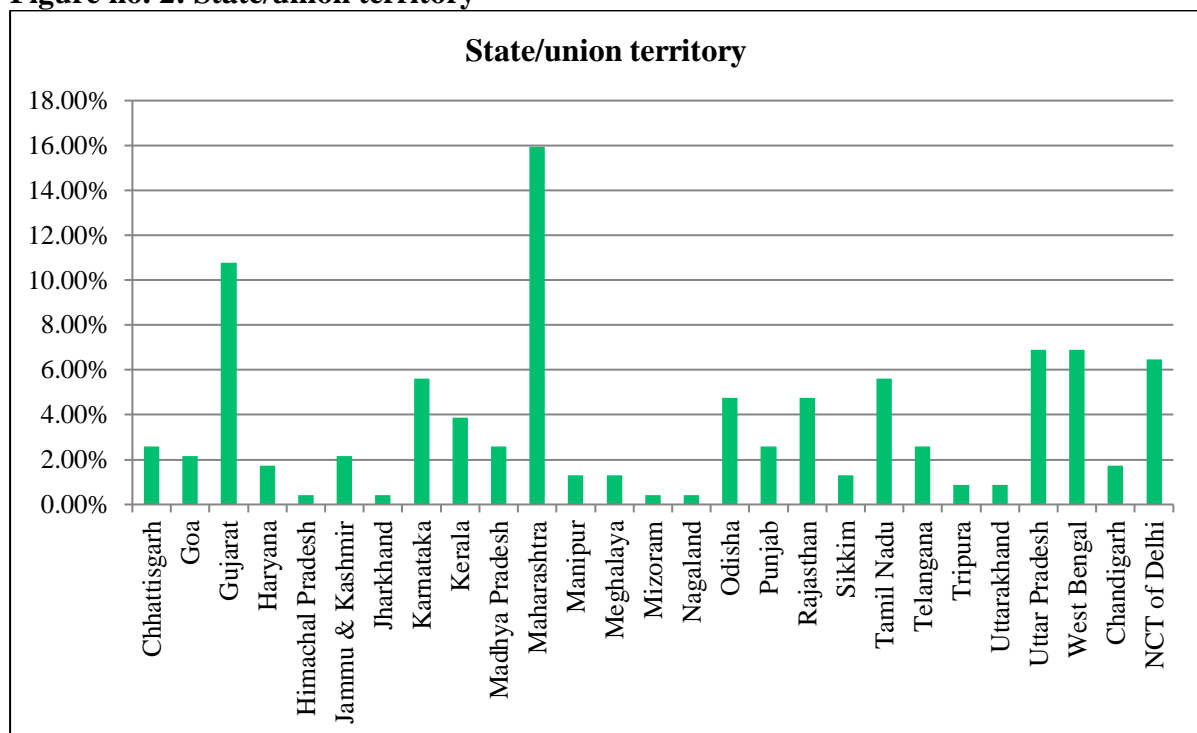
About 209 (89%) respondents were from the urban areas and the rest from rural areas 27 (11%). The highest response received for the survey was from Maharashtra state 16% followed by Gujarat state 11%. Responses were not received from Bihar state and union territories like Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep and Puducherry.

Affiliation of respondents
It was observed that majority of the respondents were working in university library 77(32.63%) followed by college library 54(22.88%). From 'Others' 7(2.97%) it was observed that there were respondents like 3 Research scholars, 1 was working in library network (INFLIBNET), 1 with a library of Management Association, 1 Library Consultant, 1 was LIS teacher switched to entrepreneurship (Image consultant).

Table no. 1: Types of libraries where respondents work

Types of Libraries	Responses	
School library	7.20%	17
College library	22.88%	54
University library	32.63%	77
Special library	10.59%	25
Corporate library	2.97%	7
Public library	1.27%	3
Private library	0.42%	1
Library of Institutions of national importance like IIMs, IITs etc.	10.59%	25
LIS teacher	8.05%	19
Retired LIS teacher/Librarian	0.42%	1
Other (please specify)	2.97%	7
	Answered	**236**
	Skipped	**1**

Education

It was noted that majority of the respondents were MLISc degree holders, i.e. 154 (65.53%), and around a quarter of respondents were Ph.D. holders. It was very interesting to observe that there were five respondents (2.13%) had done Ph.D. in other subjects apart from LIS. From 'Others' 39(16.60%) it was observed that there were respondents 8 pursuing Ph.D., 1 M.Phil., 1 possessed Post Doctorate in LIS, 10 SET/NET. About 14 mentioned that they did diploma in various subjects such as Population Studies, German Language, Computer Application, Library automation, Computer programming, Home science. One mentioned about doing Certificate courses in Foreign Languages.

Table no. 2: Education

Education	Responses	
Certificate course in LIS	1.28%	3
BLISc	10.21%	24
MLISc	65.53%	154
M.Phil. in LIS	10.21%	24
Ph.D. in LIS	28.51%	67
Graduate degree in any course apart from LIS	10.64%	25
Post graduate degree in any course apart from LIS	18.30%	43
Ph.D. in any subject apart from LIS	2.13%	5
Other (please specify)	16.60%	39
	Answered	**235**
	Skipped	**2**

Marital Status

It was observed that majority of the respondents were married 167(71.98%), while there were 57 single (24.57%), while a negligible percentage of women were 3 divorcees, 2 separated and 1 widowed. Five respondents skipped the question.

Age

It was observed that majority of the respondents were falling in the age group 31-40(40.34%) followed by 41-50(27.90%), 51-60 (15.88%) Upto 30(14.59%). It is to be noted that there were 3, 61+ retired professionals who responded to the survey.

Outfit preference at the workplace on working days and Saturdays
It was observed that majority of the respondents preferred Salwar Kameez 121 (51.27%) followed by Chudidar/Kurta 100(42.37%) and Saree 87(36.86%). In 'Others' 23(9.75%) respondents mentioned other types of outfits preferred by them such as the combination of Jeans with and t-shirts/ Formal shirts/Kurta/ Kurti. Some mentioned about Jeggings with Kurta/Kurti. Few preferred Plazo (Palazzo) Suit, Wrap around skirt etc. Another respondent mentioned that she prefers trending formal attire.

About 4, out of 27 respondents who were from rural areas whereas 27 respondents out of 209 from urban areas wear only sarees at the workplace, making not even 20% of population wearing sarees at workplace.

Table no. 3: Outfit preference on weekdays

Outfit preference on weekdays	Responses	
Kurti	36.44%	86
Salwar Kameez	51.27%	121
Chudidar/Kurta	42.37%	100
Anarkali suits	7.20%	17
Saree	36.86%	87
Formal pants	19.07%	45
Formal skirts	1.69%	4
Depending on Institute's protocol	11.86%	28
Other (please specify)	9.75%	23
Answered		**236**
Skipped		**1**

In case of Saturdays, it was observed that majority of the respondents preferred similar outfits i.e. Salwar Kameez 84 (36.36%) followed by Chudidar/Kurta 75(32.47%), Jeans 55(23.81%), Kurti 26(24.24%). In 'Others'9(3.90%) respondents mentioned they wear a combination of Kurti and Jeggings/Jeans.

To elaborate on the outfits, respondents were asked to name their traditional dress. Out of 237, 161 responses were received, most of the respondent (91) mentioned about Saree as their traditional dress. About 10 respondents mentioned about Salwaar Kameez/Suits as their traditional dress. As Punjabi suits/Salwar suits are traditional outfits of Punjab/Haryana states. Remaining mentioned about their traditional dress mostly their state-centered attire that women wear.

Such as
Paithani saree (Maharashtra)
Phanek (wrap around) known as the "Mayek Naiba Phanek" (Manipur)
Set Saree/ Kasvu saree (Kerala)
Chaniya choli(Gujrat)
Mekhela chador(Assam)
Ao Naga dress (Nagaland)
Khasi Traditional dress(Meghalaya)

Dokhona (Bodo community from Assam)
Mizo Puan (Mizoram)
Pheran (Kashmir)
Punjabi suit/ (Kind of Salwar Kameez: Punjab/Haryana)

Further, respondents were asked about whether the management of their institution imposes certain rules regarding outfits or not. It was noted that majority of the respondents' institutions did not impose rules regarding outfits 145(62%) whereas it was there in case of 35(14.96%) respondents. About 50 respondents (21.37%) mentioned that there was no written rule but they follow certain protocol to maintain the decency. In 'Others' 4 respondents mentioned that they were not aware of such rules regarding outfits. One respondent noted that 'for teachers and librarians it is always not written policy, but understood and follow the traditional cult and culture, but it's always related to individual suitability. Less use of clothes to leave body parts uncovered may not give any extra mileage to anything'.

About 85 respondents those said formally / non - formally management impose rules regarding outfits, it was found that highest respondents were 27 from colleges, 22 from universities followed by 11 school librarians. Almost all i.e. 6 out of 7 corporate librarians those who responded to the survey follow rules regarding outfits which must be mandatory for them to follow by their institution.

Outfit preference during conference/seminar/workshops
It was observed that majority of the respondents preferred Saree 146(62.13%), Salwar Kameez 74 (31.49%) followed by Chudidar/Kurta 63(26.81%) for attending conferences. In 'Others' 10(4.26%) respondents mentioned that they like to wear Jeans/Kurta/Kurti combination as well as few mentioned about their traditional dress. One respondent particularly mentioned that depending on the weather of that place she decides about the outfits.

Table no. 4: Outfit for attending Conference/Seminar

Outfit for attending Conference/Seminar	Responses	
Kurti	21.28%	50
Salwar Kameez	31.49%	74
Chudidar/Kurta	26.81%	63
Anarkali Suits	5.53%	13
Saree	62.13%	146
Formal pants	17.02%	40
Formal skirts	2.55%	6
Your traditional dress	5.53%	13
Other (please specify)	4.26%	10
Answered		**235**
Skipped		**2**

At the time of presenting papers in the conference/seminar/workshops majority of the respondents preferred Saree 147(63.36%), Salwar Kameez 66 (28.48%) followed by Chudidar/Kurta 55(23.71%). About 19(8.19%) respondents mentioned that they like to wear their traditional dress while presenting papers.

When it was asked whether the choice of outfit change with the place (in case of presenting a paper at an international conference outside India or a Metro city in India), it was noted that 91(38.89%) respondents choose and 90(38.46%) do not choose their outfits depending upon the location. About 50(21.37%) respondents did not bother about such scenario. In 'Others' 3(1.28%) respondents mentioned that their decision depends mostly on the weather of the place, and secondly the people that attend the conference.

Almost all (99%) feel comfortable and confident in the outfit they commonly wear. In 'Others' one respondent mentioned that while traveling sometimes it becomes difficult to manage saree so she prefers chuddidar which is very obvious if the workplace is far away from home.

Selection of colours/designs/pattern of outfits considering profession and status
A large number of respondents 196(83%) said that they select outfits considering their profession and status while 35(15%) said no. In 'Others' 4 respondents gave different statements as follows 'According to me it is as per my taste rather than profession /status', 'I wear what is comfortable and suitable', 'I give special emphasis on dressing well as a person, My profession and status do not have any influence on it and the last one said that 'Little bit I consider my profession and status'. Almost all i.e. 25 out of 27 respondents who were from rural areas mentioned that they select outfits considering their profession and status.

Influence of clothing/outfits on approachability of students/library users
Nearly 172(75%) respondents felt that clothing/outfits have an influence on approachability of students/library users while in case of 53(23%) it was not. In 'Others' 4 out of 6 respondents mentioned that sometimes it has influence on approachability of students/library users. One respondent strongly believed that it does not have affect not only the students but in general, it matters for everybody.

Tattooing and body piercing
Almost all did not have a tattoo on their body 224(96%). In 'Others' 4 respondents said that they were very much interested in having one in near future. Others that 'I have not yet done a tattoo but I am very much interested. Due to my professional status, I could not dare to make one as yet'. These 4 respondents belonging to different age groups (Upto 30 (1), 31-40 (2) and 41-50(1)).

In continuation with this question when respondents were asked their opinion about the acceptability of tattooing on the body of a Librarian who comes in contact with teachers/students/administrators/scientists. It was noted that most of the respondents felt that it is a personal choice 78(33.33%). Only quarter of respondents said that it is not acceptable. In 'Others' out of 4, 2 respondents mentioned that tattooing is a personal choice. So other person has no right to interference in others life. One respondent was totally against tattoo; according to her, it burns the skin and is an unscientific approach, derogatory to positivity and worst culture for skin health. Another respondent mentioned that it is not that popular in India, especially in small cities.

**Table no. 5: Opinion about tattooing**

Opinion about tattooing	Responses	
Acceptable	10.26%	24
Not acceptable	26.50%	62
It depends on person to person	33.33%	78
It depends on institution's policy and objections	6.41%	15
It depends on the design & size of the tattoo and where it has done	12.39%	29
Not interested in answering	9.40%	22
Other (please specify)	1.71%	4
	Answered	**234**
	Skipped	3

When questioned about body piercing practice, more than half of the respondents had done ears piercing 141(61%), Nose piercing 23(10%). About 45(19%) were not interested in sharing the information. In 'Others' out of 22, 11 respondents mentioned that they had not done any body piercing. Remaining mentioned that they had done piercing at ears and nose Both. Only one mentioned that she has done belly piercing in addition to the ears. Another mentioned the reason that 'piercing is done for wearing earrings and nose ring only for appreciation and love of Punjabi culture'.

Jewellery and other accessories

It was observed that a large number of respondents preferred real jewellery 156 (72%) on daily basis. Costume jewellery was also preferred by 46(26.74%) number of respondents as it is can be easily carried with no maintenance.

Figure no. 3: Jewellery and other accessories
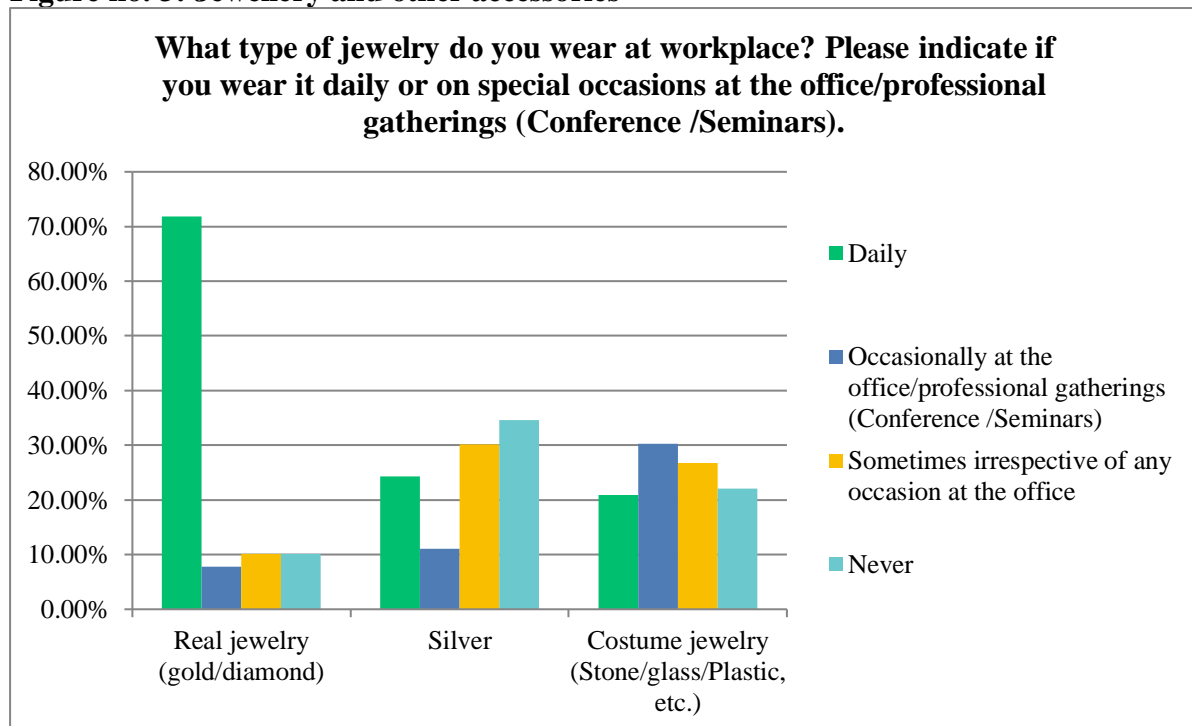
Mangalsutra

This question was applicable to the married respondents only. Out of 167 married respondents, only 90(39.13%) wear Mangalsutra as a symbol of marriage. Other respondents might not have the tradition of wearing Mangalsutra which is reflected in Others. In 'Others' respondents mentioned that they use Sindoor (red coloured cosmetic powder which is drawn to fill in the centre parting of the forehead), Vibhuti (Udi) on forehead, ring, bangles as a symbol of marriage as per their tradition.

Table no. 6: Magalsutra

Mangalsutra	Responses	
Yes regularly	39.13%	90
No	20.87%	48
Sometimes irrespective of any occasion at the workplace	6.09%	14
Occasionally when religious festivals	6.09%	14
I am unmarried	17.83%	41
Not interested in answering	3.91%	9
Other symbols (Please specify below)	0.43%	1
Other (please specify)	5.65%	13
Answered		**230**
Skipped		**7**

Bangles /Bindi

It was observed that more than half of respondents wear bangles while 51(21.79%) did not. About 49(21%) sometimes wear bangles. In 'Others' one mentioned that she regularly wears a 'Kada' and on other occasions wear bangles, few also mentioned that they like to wear wristwatch in one hand.

In case of Bindi, it was observed that nearly half of respondents put Bindi on their forehead. About quarter of respondents 60(26%) said no while 46(20%) sometimes put Bindi on the forehead. In 'Others' respondents mentioned that they put bindi only when Indian traditional outfits worn by them, not on western outfits. As in India pants, shirts are considered as western outfits.

Importance of the jewellery/tattoo/outfits, being a librarian

It was observed that 90(38.30%) respondents expressed that they care to be presentable, followed by 78(33.19%) mentioned that they dress very simply. About a good number of respondents 40(17.02%) were confident enough to wear anything if they can carry well that outfit.

In 'Others' respondents mentioned that 'I wear very light jewellery but no tattoo', 'I dress according to my mood', 'I do not like wearing such things which make people stare at me', 'Clothes that suits me and also the one that gives a decent & elegant look to my position', 'I prefer dainty pieces and take a minimalist approach'.

Table no. 7: Importance of the jewellery/tattoo/outfits

Importance of the jewellery/tattoo/outfits	Responses	
I am very particular	14.47%	34
I care to be presentable	38.30%	90
I dress very simply	33.19%	78
I do not consider this an important matter	16.17%	38
I wear anything if I can carry it well	17.02%	40
Other (please specify)	2.55%	6
	Answered	**235**
	Skipped	**2**

Personal grooming for librarians

It was observed that a large number of respondents 208(88.89%) felt that personal grooming is important for a librarian. In 'Others' 8(3.42%) respondents mentioned that grooming should be done not only for librarians but for others too. Few felt that grooming is very important for women. A few strongly felt that grooming should be necessary for young professionals as the young professionals are very casual about their overall personality.

Stereotyping of librarians in media (Like formal dress with hair bun and thick-rimmed glasses and shushing all the time)

It was observed that 93(39.74%) felt that librarians have not been stereotyped in media as far as Indian media is concerned. Whereas 49(20.94%) respondents felt they had been stereotyped. In 'Others' respondents mentioned that in recent times the image of the librarian has changed due to ICT. One respondent noted that 'Librarians are not versatile, they are mostly introvert'.

Table no. 8: Stereotyping of librarians

Stereotyping of librarians	Responses	
Yes	20.94%	49
No	39.74%	93
May be	19.66%	46
I didn't pay attention	17.52%	41
Other (please specify)	2.14%	5
	Answered	**234**
	Skipped	**3**

Any further opinions about the jewellery/tattoo/outfits for a woman librarian

About 226 respondents gave their opinion in the comment box. It has been grouped into 8 categories presented in the following table no. 9 with the few important statements given by respondents.

Table no. 9: Opinion

Groups	Statements
Library service is more important than the outfit, jewellery and makeup	'According to me, a Librarian should look as a professional librarian. For her, it doesn't matter whether she is married or unmarried, wearing gold or silver earnings rather than the services provided by her to the users. She should wear those outfit which is comfortable for her in the day to day routine and that to it has to be a simple n decent. Librarians don't work to impress others by the way of looks or clothes or anything. But the institute should be impressed by her work. Even tattoo is not important to identify as a Librarian'. 'The librarian has its own complete personality, because of its knowledge, he has no need of make-up.' 'In a country like India where millions of researchers, scholars, students, academia are really not getting the appropriate source of information and for which my country is struggling I think outfit, jewellery, tattoo does not come in my mind while serving my users'. 'Jewellery is not important for me. How we are behaving with users and students or even soft talking with students, helping, understanding their needs and demands make the image of teachers/ librarians'.
Dress up simply	'Neatly dressed with pleasant personality is what students find approachable in the librarian'. 'Outfit of the Librarian should be presentable as s/he serves a varied class of users'. 'One should dress up according to her profession and focus on graceful appearance'. 'I cannot judge how women should dress up, but whatever we wear at the office that should reflect our personality. I as a person prefer dresses that are not too loud or revealing'.
Modern librarian	'A stylish librarian becomes a matter of gossip for the people around the Institute. But it is also true that it depends on the Institutions and at times on a person's perspective'. 'We should look modern so one can feel that library profession is also modern'.
Outfit depends upon the type of library served, place of library and the weather	'I consider dressing up is according to the environment you are working in and it also keeps changing with the latest fashion trends'. 'Anything that suits the professionals and they are comfortable with. The library being a social institution, the attire should be according to the type of institution, library, and their users'. 'Fashion goes with age, personality, and especially in librarian's case for small city librarians, it's not that trendy and fashionable. Though in metros

	and big institutions means higher educational and private institutes having more perks follow the fashion more that is what I personally feel'.
Jewellery and other accessories are depending upon family custom, traditions and beliefs	'Shift of joint to nuclear family structure gives freedom to wear what you want.' 'A librarian is judged by his or her warmth and connect with the reader, and love of books, not by attire. Most of the questions are about jewellery and attire. Jewellery is decided by family culture and sometimes compulsions at home. What about male librarians? Are they judged by their finger rings?' 'Wearing gold jewellery is part of Indian culture, every woman in Indian society likes to wear jewellery as per her choice. As per my observation, working women in library science likes to wear jewellery designs which are sober and subtle...unlike women in other fields'. 'It totally depends on person to person what she wants to wear and how much comfortable she feels. But in a country like India where people are very much judgmental on what someone wears, this is quite disturbing and distracts the woman from work. Even the in-laws and husband also stop you from what you want to actually wear in the office and feel comfortable'.
Wear anything if you can carry it well	'One should wear dresses and jewellery which they can carry easily'.
Outfit, Makeup, Jewellery should be decent	'Let the dressing and makeup be decent, dignified and pleasant in the workplace'. 'One must be presentable. Should not go to college or any workplace casually. Formal dresses play a significant role in exhibiting the quality of a good leader'. 'Many times librarians come in contact with users, faculty and Publishers/vendors. The dress they wear and their communication skill matters'.
Beside outfit it is the overall personality which is more influencing	'Irrespective of your profession, I feel it is important to dress well to feel good about oneself, needless to say, the good feeling automatically contributes to confidence. Dressing well as well as appropriately to influences your professional commitment'.

Conclusion and Discussion

Every state in India has unique traditional clothes that women wear. However, it was observed that three prominent types of clothes worn by women librarians' i.e Salwar Kameez, Chudidar/Kurta, Saree was preferred on weekdays, similar outfits were preferred on weekends or Saturdays including Jeans with Kurti. Saree was the outfit preferred by respondents for attending and even for presenting papers in the conference. A few

respondents mentioned about their traditional outfits that they like to wear especially at the time of presenting papers.

Almost all feel comfortable and confident in the outfits they commonly wear. Respondents select outfits considering their profession and status. The majority felt that clothing/outfits have the influence on approachability of students/library users. Librarians comes in contact with vendors, publishers, students, colleagues, higher authorities, scientists, professors, and other professionals, so need to dress up gracefully.

Even though body piercing is done as part of the traditional ritual in many communities but the common places where the piercing is done was the nose and ears which has been reflected in the present study

Tattooing is done on the face especially forehead, and on the hands traditionally in many communities (especially tribal groups) of India. But in case of women library professionals, it was completely nil. Almost all were not having a tattoo on their body, might be because of their personal/professional status they did not opt for it. Respondents largely felt that it's a personal choice for everyone to have or not about tattoo/body piercing who come in contact with teachers/students/administrators/scientists. It was observed that a large number of respondents preferred real jewellery on daily basis as in Indian culture daily use of different real jewelry at different body parts has an importance and significance.

More than half of the respondents wear bangles and put Bindi on their forehead on daily basis but surprisingly most of the women librarians did not wear the Mangalsutra as a symbol of marriage on daily basis. It was observed that a good number of respondents expressed that they care to be presentable and dress in a simple manner. It was noted that a large number of respondents felt that personal grooming is important for a librarian as librarians need to be presentable and communicable. In case of stereotyping of librarians respondents, felt that librarians have had not been stereotyped in media as far as Indian media is concerned.

Salwar Kameez and Chudidar/Kurta have gained popularity because these outfits are more functional and comfortable. Over the time, the sense of dressing has evolved and changed. Due to factors like globalisation and westernisation, today's women librarians have taken a modern approach in case of dressing style. Indian fashion is at its peak in case of fashion trends/fusion. In the future there might be different types of kurtis a unique combination of Indo western outfit may take a different shape and may be most preferred outfit of women librarians as its gaining popularity at least in cities. Body piercing and tattooing even though it is part of India's culture from ancient times but still librarians have kept themselves away from it may be because of fear of professional conduct, work culture, dislikes etc. Jewellery and other accessories are worn by women librarians but again they have kept a minimalistic approach. Overall women librarians of all ages, traditional to modern, rural to urban, private librarians to special librarians have maintained decency and diligence in their professional and personal attire and general behavior, keeping alive their culture, self-esteem and their professional commitment.

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