



Mini-me versions of sherwanis, salwar kameez pep up kids' ethnic category

The market for kids' ethnic wear has seen a big push with numerous regional brands making inroads. While not many national level brands have ventured into this space, smaller ones are doing good business catering to regional tastes with their innovations and designer creations, write **Shubhangi Bidwe** and **Ajay Goswami**

- Ethnic wear a big draw among children today
- Kids' ethnic wear is the fastest growing category: Technopak
- Miniature versions of adult clothing are in demand
- Focus on comfort, fabric, embellishments and colour
- For Kids has introduced a new segment in small sizes for babies 0.6 to 1.6 years
- Loveu Kids launched a two-piece sharara with frills on floral prints.
- Keel Beel uses fabrics from Surat and imported fabrics from Turkey to create fashion-forward styles
- The collections of Pari Creations are made from imported fancy fabrics

India offers multiple, region-specific, product categories in ethnic wear. While north India has salwaar-kameez-dupatta and kurta-pajama; South India, prefers saris and lehenga-cholis. With economic liberalisation and better access to information, trends and products, ethnic wear has penetrated beyond the traditional consumption

centers into newer markets. Over the years, it has also percolated into the kids' wear category. Understanding market potential many brands are offering mini versions of sherwanis and fashionable salwaar kameez for children.

Moving ahead with innovations

A Technopak study revealed, kids' ethnic wear is the fastest growing category with many brands launching their own kids ethnic wear collections. A prominent example is Biba, which recently launched a collection for girls called Biba Girls that offers products in the premium category. "Offering an exquisite range of fashionable garments, this collection includes dresses, lehenga sets, girl's tops, jumpsuits and salwar suits for girls. It also offers silk Anarkali suits with gorgeous embroidery and golden thread work; trendy asymmetric suits in eye-catching prints and soothing fabrics; and kalidar suits that occupy a wide space in every girls' ethnic wear collection," explains Siddharth Bindra, Managing Director of BIBA.

Another brand, For Kids has also introduced a new segment in smaller sizes for babies in the age group 0.6 to 1.6 years. "We have launched ethnic wear styles for infants that can be worn during weddings, festivals, religious and cultural ceremonies. Our baby-lehenga-cholis have super-soft inners and are made of soft outer fabrics with embellishments that makes the baby feel comfy and happy," says Pradeep Savla, Founder of the brand.

On its part, brand Loveu Kids launched a two-piece sharara with frills on floral prints. The brand also offers exotic, triple-flounce, waterfrill sharara with semi-open and jacket-type tops, twi-three jacket tops and sharara sets, etc. Gujarat-based brand Keel Beel has launched an ethnic 'sari-style' gown. "This is a mulberry colored sari-style, with a frill-sleeve choli and attached draped dupatta and soft palazzo style that mimics sari drape," explains Kaushik Mehta, Proprietor, Parshwanath Clothing Company that owns the brand.

A specialist in kurtas and baby frocks Dearly

Siddharth Bindra Managing Director, BIBA

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a lehenga-choli set in sunshine yellow with golden roses printed on net, over a can-can skirt. “We have launched a soft caramel-gold, ready-to-wear sari-choli set that has fully draped pleats and knotted pallu,” states Pradeep Savla, Founder of the brand that offers gowns, lehenga-cholis, salwar-kameez and palazzo-kameez, for girls aged 2 to 17 years.

Focus on skin-friendly, imported fancy fabrics

It is important for kids' brands to offer skin friendly fashion therefore the focus can never shift away from soft fabrics like cotton. “Our range is made from superior, fine count, imported Giza cotton and rayon which keeps

offers beautiful and stylish products with total comfort. “Suitable for the Indian climate, our designs and fabrics keep both retailers and consumers happy,” says Arvind Chheda, Proprietor of Fashion Forecast, the company that owns the brand.

All about delicate embroideries, soft colors

Fruity colours, delicate or rich embroidery, motifs and soft sashes dominate kids' ethnic wear this season. “We have launched deep crimson or ruby velvet embroidered frocks suitable for evening wedding receptions,” notes Chheda. “These value-added frocks have an overlay of embroidered net, over a printed skirt,” he adds. For boys, the brand offers both kurtas and dhoti-kurta sets that are popular for festivals, cultural functions and weddings. Our party-type and festive kurtas are available in bright colors with different neck styles such as the bandhgalas,” he informs.

Though customers want to touch and feel these garments to check their quality and softness, their color is also important. This has led to brands launching collections in soft summer colors. “Due to the hot weather, we have focused on pastel shades like soft pista green, pale blue, baby pink, peaches and lemon,” Chheda says. For Kids has launched

Jayantibhai

Founder, Bambini

“Our range is made from superior, fine count, imported Giza cotton and rayon which not only keeps our knitwear smooth and soft but also gives it a classy look,”

our knitwear smooth and soft and gives a classy look,” observes Jayantibhai, founder of Bambini.

On the other hand, Keel Beel uses beautiful fabrics from Surat and imported fabrics from Turkey to create fashion-forward styles. “Our highest selling item in the last two months is the one-piece gown in soft viscose with panels of self-colored chikankari work on the skirt, with gorgeous Red-Tulip computer-stitched florals in resham and zari thread,” notes Mehta.

Pari Creations collections are also made from imported fancy fabrics including jacquards, silks, nets, tulle, embroidered or sequined fabrics. “We start creating stunning garments from the fabric stage itself. For one to three year old kids, we use soft, light-fabrics in gentle shades and soft embellishments so that little kids don't feel uncomfortable. Our embellishments are also a big hit among our customers,” adds Bhavesh Thakkar, Director, Pari Creations.

Price matters

“There is growing demand for occasion-specific clothes with many private labels offering low-priced garments for kids,” says Bindra. With affordability being the key for all brands, their creations are priced modestly in the range of Rs 1,000-4,000. One of the top 10 brands of party frocks and gowns in India, Pari Creations offers ethnic ghagra-choli sets between Rs 2,000 to Rs 4,000 while gowns range between Rs 1,500 to Rs 3,000. Similarly ghagra cholis offered by LoveU kids for two to four year olds are priced Rs 1,500 to Rs 3,000. “We also offer ghagra-cholis for kids 5 to 15 years,” says Jigar Buricha, one of the founders of the brand.

Bhavesh Thakkar

Director, Pari Creations

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