



Preferences Regarding Constructional and Designing Features of *KAMEEZ* for Urban Lactating Women

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ABSTRACT

Lactation is a period when women experiences physical as well as psychological changes. This period leads a woman to another level of maturity, i.e. her motherhood. She has her own demands and needs during this period, so her demand during lactation for dressing will be different from normal condition. Like absorbent type texture, looseness and the most important is specially designed dress so that she has no need to lift up the shirt while feeding her child and has extra home for free movement. Woman can improve herself by wearing proper dress, which can be created by using varied design techniques in an appropriate way. Color and design being the fundamental elements in dress if properly used enhance the personality of an individual. It is possible by developing an understanding of design that one can select clothing that will fulfill the wearer's desire. Most of the lactating mothers just wear ordinary suits in which it looks very awkward while feeding the child and she feels herself out of place, even in markets ,dresses specially meant for lactating mothers are not available. So it is very important to design construct some specially designed dresses for lactating mothers keeping in mind the comfort ability, becomingness and functionality regarding lactation. A study on existing clothing pattern of dress for lactating mothers and problems encountered was conducted with the same motive. To find out the availability of various casual wear, formal wear and night wear for lactating women, many leading shops/showrooms/malls of readymade garments of Hisar city were visited. Twenty five urban lactating women were randomly selected from maternity and children hospitals to know their clothing practices during lactation period and problems encountered with existing clothing practices during lactation period. It was found during survey that urban women were not satisfied with their existing clothing practices during lactation period and wanted to change it by adding additional features in their dresses to make these comfortable and trendy

KEYWORDS

INTRODUCTION

Clothing is one of the most important factors in the development of an individual personality. Clothing is one of the basic needs of our life. Every individual needs some kind of thing or other to protect, to cover and to beautify his/her body, which is of great importance to him/her. It influences a person socially, psychologically and emotionally. Personality to a certain extent is affected by appropriate selection and fit of clothing. A certain amount of confidence and security is obtained by the individual from an appropriate dress. Clothes do not necessarily 'make a person' but they do go a long way towards building up a feeling of satisfaction and well being.

A dress should be suitable for the person for whom it has been designed. Some of the important considerations which should be taken are climate of the region, season of the year for which the garment is made, the time or type of occasion when it is most likely to be worn, the type of role and age of person. As the need regarding clothes varies, the choice of color, material and print also differs from person to person. These variations are due to difference in age, personality, sex and role the individual has to play.

Every change in a life- situation- birth, entering school, college, getting a job, marriage, parenthood and even death requires a change in wardrobe. Even in the course of daily life, situation after situation requires a change in dress to facilitate and symbolize the situational change.

Lactation is a period when women experiences physical as well as psychological changes. This period leads a woman to another level of maturity, i.e. her motherhood. She has her own demands and needs during this period, so her demand during lactation for dressing will be different from normal

condition. Like absorbent type texture, looseness (comfort) and the most important is specially designed dress so that she has no need to lift up the shirt while feeding her child and has extra home for free movement. Maternity clothes have very significant role during lactation period also because breast feeding in regular clothes become awkward and embarrassing. Thus, there is a great need to design clothing for lactating women (Khatrri, 2016).

One can improve herself by wearing proper dress, which can be created by using varied design techniques in an appropriate way. Color and design being the fundamental elements in dress if properly used enhance the personality of an individual. One thing that is essential for all nursing moms is a good wardrobe of breastfeeding clothes (Lawrence, 2005). It is possible by developing an understanding of design that one can select clothing that will fulfill the wearer's desire. Nursing clothes make feeding your infant easier and more enjoyable (Anonymous, 2015).

Most of the lactating mothers just wear ordinary suits in which it looks very awkward while feeding the child and she feels herself out of place, even in markets ,dresses specially meant for lactating mothers are not available. So it is very important to design construct some specially designed dresses for lactating mothers keeping in mind the comfort ability, becomingness and functionality regarding lactation. A study regarding preferences of lactating women for type of fabric, constructional features and designing features of *kameez* for lactating women was conducted with the same motive.

TECHNICAL PLAN OF WORK

To find out the availability of various casual wear, formal wear and night wear for lactating women, many leading shops/

showrooms/malls of readymade garments of Hisar city were visited. Twenty five urban lactating women were randomly selected from maternity and children hospitals and nearby areas of Hisar city to know their clothing practices during lactation period.

The data was collected with the help of self-structured interview schedule. Preferences of lactating women were taken for type of fabric, constructional features and designing features of *kameez* for lactating women on three point scale i.e. highly preferred, preferred and least preferred scoring 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Weighted mean scores were categorized as highly suitable (3.00-2.34), suitable (2.33-1.67) and somewhat suitable (1.66-1.00).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section includes the information regarding preferences of lactating women for type of fabric, constructional features and designing features of *kameez* for lactating women.

Table 1: Preferences of respondents regarding fabric of kameez for lactating women (n = 25)

| Features | Categories | Urban (n = 25) | |
|------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| | | Rank | Weighted mean score (WMS) |
| Fabric | Cotton | I | 3.0 |
| | Cotton Blend | II | 2.48 |
| | Synthetic | III | 1.08 |
| Colour Intensity | Dark | I | 2.52 |
| | Dull | I | 2.52 |
| | Bright | IV | 1.16 |
| Fabric Print | Plain | IV | 2.48 |
| | Floral | II | 2.56 |
| | Abstract | V | 2.08 |
| | Small | I | 2.84 |
| | Bold | VII | 1.16 |
| | Dense | III | 2.52 |
| Scattered | VI | 2.04 | |

Highly preferred 2.34-3.00; Preferred 1.67-2.33; Least preferred 1.00-1.66

The data related to various attributes of fabric preferred by rural women for *kameez* of lactating women has been presented in Table 1. The data revealed that urban lactating women highly preferred cotton fabric for *kameez*. It was ranked 1st with weighted mean score 3.00 followed by cotton blend, ranked 2nd with WMS 2.48, synthetic fabric was least preferred fabric for *kameez*, ranked 3rd, WMS 1.08.

Thus, cotton and cotton blend fabrics were highly preferred (3.0, 2.48) fabrics by urban lactating women for *kameez*.

The urban lactating women highly preferred dark dull colours for *kameez* of lactating women as these attributes of fabric were ranked 1st with WMS 2.52 followed by light colours, which were preferred by them with WMS 2.04, ranked 3rd. Bright colours were least preferred colours by urban lactating women ranked 4th with WMS 1.16. Thus, dark and dull colours were highly preferred (2.52) by urban lactating women for *kameez*.

As far as print of fabric was concerned, it is clear from the data that urban lactating women preferred small print as it ranked 1st with score 2.84 followed by floral prints ranked 2nd with WMS 2.56, dense prints ranked 3rd with score 2.52, plain fabrics ranked 4th, (2.48). Abstract prints were at rank 5th with score 2.08 followed by scattered print ranked 6th with WMS 2.04. Bold prints were least preferred print by urban women as these ranked 7th with WMS 1.16. Thus, small (2.84), floral (2.56), dense (2.52) and plain fabrics (2.48) were highly preferred by urban women. Murray(2015) suggested lactating women that "when picking out pieces for your wardrobe, keep in mind that patterns, prints, and darker colors will help hide any unexpected leaks much better than solids or light colors.

Preferences of respondents regarding various constructional features of kameez for lactating women

The data regarding preferences of urban and rural women for various constructional features of *kameez* for lactating women has been very well furnished in Table 2.

Table 2: Preferences of respondents regarding various constructional features of kameez for lactating women (n = 25)

| Features | Categories | Urban (n = 25) | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| | | Rank | Weighted mean score (WMS) |
| Silhouette | Straight | III | 1.56 |
| | A-line | II | 2.52 |
| | Flared | I | 2.56 |
| Fitting | Fitted all over | III | 1.08 |
| | Loose all over | II | 2.24 |
| | Loose at bust to hip level | I | 2.64 |
| Openings | Front | I | 2.52 |
| | Back | II | 1.16 |
| | Shoulder | III | 1.04 |
| Length of opening | Upto bust line | III | 1.28 |
| | Upto waist line | I | 2.48 |
| | Upto hip line | IV | 1.04 |
| | Full length | II | 2.24 |
| Sleeve type | Simple | I | 2.56 |
| | Designed | II | 2.52 |
| Sleeve length | Half sleeves | I | 2.52 |
| | ¾ sleeves | I | 2.52 |
| | Full sleeves | III | 2.16 |
| Side slits | Upto 6" | III | 1.08 |
| | 6" to 12" | I | 2.52 |
| | More than 12" | II | 2.08 |

Highly preferred 2.34-3.00; Preferred 1.67-2.33; Least preferred 1.00-1.66

Data pertaining to silhouette of *kameez* shows that majority of urban lactating mother preferred flared *kameez*, which got first rank with score 2.56 followed by A-line *kameez* ranked 2nd (2.52) and straight *kameez* were least preferred by urban women with weighted mean score 1.56, ranked 3rd.

As far as fitting of *kameez* was concerned, majority of urban women highly preferred loose *kameez* at bust to hip level during lactating period as this fitting type got first rank with WMS 2.64 followed by loose all over *kameez* ranked 2nd (2.24). All over fitted *kameez* was least preferred by urban women with score 1.08 (ranked 3rd)

It is evident from the data that majority of urban lactating women highly preferred the front openings in *kameez* of lactating women as it got first rank with weighted mean score 2.52. Back and shoulder openings were least preferred by urban women with weighted mean score 1.16 and 1.04.

The highly preferred length of opening was up to waist line by urban women as it got first rank with WMS 2.48. The urban women prefer full length front openings in *kameez* as it got 2nd rank with WMS 2.24. The other length of openings i.e. upto bust line and hip line were least preferred by urban women with WMS 1.28 and 1.04, ranked 3rd and 4th, respectively.

The data regarding type of sleeve and length of sleeve indicated that urban women highly preferred both simple and designed sleeve with WMS 2.56 and 2.52 ranked 1st and 2nd, respectively.

Majority of urban women highly preferred ¾ sleeves and half sleeves with WMS 2.52, ranked 1. Full length sleeves were preferred by urban women with WMS 2.16 ranked 3rd. Side slits of 6" to 12" were highly preferred by urban women while

side slits of more than 12" length were preferred by them with WMS 2.52 and 2.08 ranked Ist and IInd, respectively. The least preferred length of side slits by urban women was upto 6" with WMS 1.08, ranked IIIrd.

Preferences of respondents regarding designing features of *kameez* for lactating women

It is elucidated from the data in Table 3 that majority of urban women highly preferred tucks as means of providing fullness in *kameez* of lactating women with WMS 2.56, ranked Ist followed by shirring, pleat and smoking ranked IInd, IIIrd and IV with WMS 2.48, 2.40 and 2.36, respectively. Gathers were preferred by urban women with WMS 2.28 ranked V.

Table 3: Preferences of respondents regarding designing features of *kameez* for lactating women (n = 25)

| Features | Categories | Urban (n = 25) | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| | | Rank | Weighted mean score (WMS) |
| Means of providing fullness | Pleat | III | 2.40 |
| | Gathers | V | 2.28 |
| | Tucks | I | 2.56 |
| | Shirring | II | 2.48 |
| | Smoking | IV | 2.36 |
| Fasteners | Buttons | II | 2.40 |
| | Hooks | IV | 1.52 |
| | Studs | I | 2.44 |
| | Velcro tape | III | 2.36 |
| | Strings | V | 1.24 |

Highly preferred 2.34-3.00; Preferred 1.67-2.33; Least preferred 1

Thus, tucks, shirring and pleats were highly preferred means of providing fullness in *kameez* of lactating women by urban women with WMS 2.56, 2.48 and 2.40.

Data pertaining to preferences of respondents for type of fasteners is also presented in Table 3. It is indicated that urban women highly preferred studs with WMS 2.44 ranked Ist followed by buttons and velcro tape ranked IInd and IIIrd with WMS 2.40 and 2.36, respectively. Hooks and strings were least preferred fasteners by them, ranked IVth and Vth with WMS 1.52 and 1.24. Thus, studs and buttons were highly preferred fasteners by urban women. But studs were at rank first by urban women with WMS 2.44.

CONCLUSION

During market survey, it was found that not a single leading shop/showroom/mall of Hisar city was having specific garment for lactating women. Most of the urban women were not satisfied with their existing dresses because of amount of ease allowance provided in the *kameez* and length of opening in the *kameez* not as per requirements.

Cotton and cotton blend fabrics of dark and dull colors with small, floral and dense prints were highly preferred by urban lactating women

Flared silhouette of *kameez* with front openings upto waist line, simple and designed, $\frac{3}{4}$ and half sleeves and side slits of 6" to 12" were the highly preferred constructional features of the *kameez* by urban lactating women.

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