Research Paper

Clothing expenditure patterns of families of Jaipur district in Rajasthan

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■**ABSTRACT :** The importance of clothes have increased manifold in the present era. Clothing has become one of the important heads in the household expenditure. Taking this into consideration, the amount of expenditure done, factors affecting the purchase of clothing and practices followed while purchasing clothing are explored both in urban and rural setting. 121 resident families were randomly selected from urban and rural Jaipur district, Rajasthan and the information was elicited from the women of the house by the questionnaire technique. The results indicated that increase in income leads to increase in expenditure on clothing. Besides income, social status and occupation are significant affecting factors determining clothing purchases for high and low income groups. While working with attributes, it was found that price and durability were given first priority by rural and urban low-income group, which has received the fifth and fourth priority by middle, and high-income group, respectively. They considered comfort and care of clothing as their first and second priority. The paper provides the insight into household clothing expenditure.

■ **KEY WORDS :** Expenditure estimates, Budget, Social status, Profession, Clothing attributes

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Clothing is indispensable part in the life of a person. Protection, modesty and adornment are reasons for wearing clothes as chalked out by many authors (Flugel, 1930; Horn and Gruel, 1968; Kefgan and Specht, 1979; Rouse, 1989). The authorities differ in opinion as to which one is primary motive behind wearing clothes. The renowned psychologist Ryan says 'Clothing reveals a person's self-confidence and it is also a mirror of his culture, civilization, and social status. One can easily evaluate a person's sex, livelihood, income, age, and social status through the garments they have worn (Ryan, 1965).

That is the reason why clothing finds a special place in the domestic budget. As per the list namely 'Domestic consumer and Expense Burden-Report 2004' published by Economic and Statistical Department, New Delhi, 'Expenses on domestic requirements incurred by a family unit during a reference period is termed as Domestic Consumer Expenses' (Anonymous, 2004). Here the word reference period means- a period defined in advance for the purpose. Domestic consumer expense is a total of monetary value of varied expense items for instance:

– Food, tobacco, gas, light
– Clothing
– Other commodities and services

Statistics reveal that the share of food and groceries in the consumer's wallet continues to drop from 40 per cent in 2003 to 36 per cent in 2008 and is expected to fall to 32 per cent in 2013 whereas discretionary expenditure has increased from 27 per cent to 30 per cent and is expected to rise to 32 per cent in respective years (Pal, 2010). Clothing expenditures in India tend to be relatively higher for households with higher incomes as projected by The National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) (Nayak, 2010). Majority of Indian middle class (about 39%) live in top 20 cities and are exposed to consumer goods including textiles. NCAER observed that younger middle class below the age of 35 years has grown @ 31 per cent as compared to 2 per cent of the age group of 55 years. Rising income of households will create more disposable funds, major part of which would naturally go to life style clothing and made ups (Lal, 2011).

Thus, clothing happens to be one of the main items in domestic consumer expense and it has been seen that there