

# Girls preferences for different garment features in designing western dresses

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Received: 12.02.2015; Revised: 27.03.2015; Accepted: 12.04.2015

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■ **ABSTRACT** : For this study, a total of 90 college going girls were selected through purposive random sampling technique. Preferences of college girls for silhouettes, fabric types, colour combinations and other constructional features were taken. The data collected revealed that A-line, balloon, sheath, mermaid and ball gown silhouettes were the five most preferred ones. Plain georgette and cotton fabrics, black and red colours in single and two coloured combination for western dresses with round shape neckline were most preferred. Among constructional features, respondents preferred gathers with elastic, knife pleats, pin tucks, round shaped yoke and gathered ruffles. Embroidery as surface embellishment techniques and lace, swarovski and sequins for surface embellishment were most preferred by the respondents.

■ **KEY WORDS**: Western dresses, Silhouettes, Embellishment, Design, Most preferred

■ **HOW TO CITE THIS PAPER** : Devi, Varsha and Saini, Harminder Kaur (2015). Girls preferences for different garment features in designing western dresses. *Asian J. Home Sci.*, 10 (1) : 79-83.

In the present age of fashion and style, not only women, but everybody wants to look different and stylish. Gone are the days when fashion and clothing were known to be a women's domain. Today, men also want to look good. They have started believing in fashion now and do not hesitate to experiment with their looks and style. Craze for bright colours like red, pink and blue is prevailing in the market, which were generally associated with women. The notion to view men as producers and women as consumers of fashion is outmoded these days (Bakewell *et al.*, 2006).

Fashion plays an important part in everyone's life. Fashion guides us towards maximizing our assets and minimizing our flaws. The importance of style and fashion in today's society is much underrated. The way that you

look and dress is the first impression that people have of you. In order to give people a good first impression, you need to be dressed in a way that fits your style and does not look sloppy or messy, but one that does compliment you. Personal style is a great way to express who you are and what you stand for. You can have fun with your own fashion statement but you should try and shy away from being too bold or it will make your outfit look like a costume (Benton, 2008).

Everybody wants to look stylish, beautiful, sophisticated and impressive by wearing different designed dresses made by fusion of different silhouettes and style lines. A certain changes in silhouettes and style lines make the dress more impressive and stylish. In fashion, the silhouette is the overall outline or shape of a

garment. Three basic silhouettes form the basis for all clothing and are considered long-run fashions. These cycle over a period of years; the bell, with outer form rounded to waistline; the straight, hangs from the shoulders; and the bustle back silhouette. A-line and V-shape are modifications of the straight silhouette (Anonymous, 2007).

Women prefer western outfits because their cuts are better and there is a wide range to choose from. Further, it is chic look. The modern Indian women is working and independent, this is well exemplified in western outfits (Kumar, 2004).

**RESEARCH METHODS**

A survey was conducted to know the preferences of the respondents with respect to different silhouettes, constructional features, surface embellishments and surface embellishment techniques, fabric types, colours and colour combinations to be used in western dresses. An interview schedule was employed to study the socio-personal profile of the respondents and their preferences for design development of western dresses for college going girls. Three colleges from Ludhiana city were selected randomly. Then total sample of 90 college going girls between 18-22 years of age were selected purposively from three colleges of Ludhiana city. Thirty respondents were selected from each college. The data collected through the interview schedule for the research study was coded, tabulated and analyzed scoring and ranking was done to get the preferences for designs and design features of different western dresses. Maximum scores were given to the most preferred design/feature and minimum to the least preferred design/feature. The scores were computed and given ranks.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

Results regarding the preferences of respondents for various silhouettes in the western dresses elicited that A-line silhouette was most preferred silhouette and was given first rank with mean score of 3.67 followed by balloon (second rank) and sheath (third rank) with mean score of 3.49 and 3.44, respectively (Table 1). Fourth and fifth ranks were given to mermaid and ball gown silhouette with mean score of 3.15 and 2.99, respectively. Whereas, straight silhouette was least preferred with mean score of 2.31.

Data in the Fig. 1 shows the preferences of respondents towards different fabric types for western dresses. Georgette and cotton fabrics were given first and second rank with mean score of 4.05 and 3.99, respectively. Linen was third preferred fabric with mean score of 3.66. Chiffon with mean score of 2.50 was given fourth rank whereas, crepe was least preferred by the respondents.

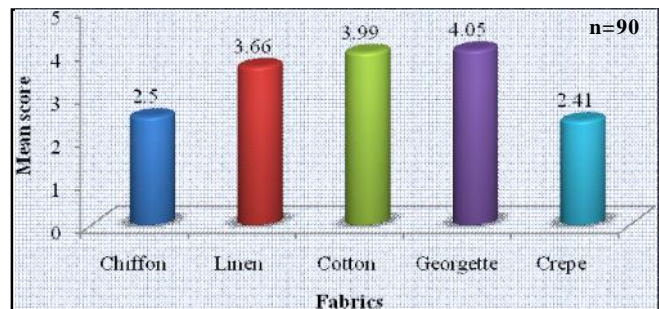


Fig. 1 : Preference of respondents for different types of fabrics for western dresses

The data presented in the Table 2 elucidates the preferences of respondents for choice of colours. It shows that the most preferred colour was black with

Types of silhouettes	Score	Mean score	Rank
A-line	330	3.67	I
Flared	228	2.35	VIII
Sheath	310	3.44	III
Mermaid	284	3.15	IV
Balloon	314	3.49	II
Princess	255	2.83	VI
Empire	234	2.60	VII
Ball gown	269	2.99	V
Straight	208	2.31	IX

mean score of 9.50. Red and white were the next preferred colours with mean score of 9.41 and 8.96, respectively and given second and third ranks. Mauve colour was least preferred with mean score of 2.73.

The data presented in the Table 3 reveals the preferences of college going girls towards different colour combinations for western dresses. Both single and two coloured combinations were given first rank with mean score of 9.50 followed by multi coloured combination with mean score of 3.99 and was given third rank.

The data presented in the Table 4 elucidates the preferences of respondents towards necklines for western dresses. It was found that first rank was given to round shape neckline with mean score of 9.57 while second and third ranks were given to U and V-shape

neckline with mean score of 9.15 and 7.67, respectively. Scalloped neckline was least preferred.

Findings regarding the preferences for constructional features in the Table 5 revealed that maximum number of the respondents preferred gathers with elastic having mean score of 3.66 which was given first rank. Second rank was given to plain gathers with mean score of 2.94. Gathers with shirring and with band were given third and fourth ranks with mean score of 2.70 and 2.56, respectively.

Table 5 also elucidates the preferential choice for types of pleats for western dresses. It was found that first rank was given to knife pleats with mean score of 3.22 while second and third ranks were given to box pleats and inverted box pleats with mean score

Colours	Score	Mean score	Rank
Black	855	9.50	I
White	806	8.96	III
Grey	657	7.30	VI
Red	847	9.41	II
Blue	689	7.66	IV
Yellow	590	6.56	VII
Cream	362	4.02	X
Brown	315	3.50	XI
Pink	590	6.56	VII
Mauve	246	2.73	XII
Orange	373	4.14	IX
Green	643	7.41	V

Colour combinations	Score	Mean score	Rank
Single colour	855	9.50	I
Two colour	855	9.50	I
Multicolour	359	3.99	III

Necklines	Score	Mean score	Rank
Round	861	9.57	I
U-neckline	824	9.15	II
V-neckline	690	7.67	III
Square	671	7.46	IV
Scalloped neckline	410	4.56	IX
Chinese Band	448	4.98	VIII
Neckline with placket opening	478	5.31	VII
Neckline with collars	628	6.98	V
Off-shoulder	491	5.46	VI

of 2.80 and 2.56, respectively. Kick pleats with mean score of 1.98 were given fourth rank. Similarly, pin tucks were given first rank with mean score of 2.90 followed by cross and broad tucks with mean score of 2.66 and 2.08 which were given second and third ranks, respectively.

Preferences for yoke designs shows that respondents gave first rank to round shape yoke design with mean score of 3.20 and second rank to U-shape

yoke design with mean score of 2.50. Third and fourth preferences were given to V-shape and asymmetrical yoke designs with mean score of 2.10 and 2.00, respectively.

As shown in the Table 5, gathered flounces with mean score of 2.99 was given first rank followed by circular ruffles which were given second rank with mean score of 2.48. Similar results for constructional features were also reported by Kaur (2003).

Table 5 : Preferences of respondents for constructional features			(n=90)
Constructional features	Score	Mean score	Ranks
<b>Gathers</b>			
Plain gathers	265	2.94	II
Gathers with band	230	2.56	IV
Gathers with elastic	329	3.66	I
Gathers with shirring	243	2.70	III
Gathers with smocking	223	2.48	V
<b>Pleats</b>			
Knife pleats	290	3.22	I
Box pleats	252	2.80	II
Inverted box pleats	230	2.56	III
Kick pleats	178	1.98	IV
<b>Tucks</b>			
Pin tucks	261	2.90	I
Broad tucks	187	2.08	III
Cross tucks	239	2.66	II
<b>Yokes</b>			
U-shape	225	2.50	II
V-shape	189	2.10	III
Round shape	288	3.20	I
Asymmetrical	180	2.00	IV
<b>Ruffles</b>			
Circular	223	2.48	II
Gathered	269	2.99	I

Table 6 : Preferences of respondents for surface embellishments in western dresses			(n=90)
Surface embellishments	Score	Mean score	Rank
Crystals	592	6.58	IV
Laces	719	7.99	I
Braids	352	3.91	VIII
Sequins	710	7.89	III
Swarovski	713	7.92	II
Binding	484	5.38	V
Beads	364	4.04	VII
Buttons	378	4.20	VI
Glitters	308	3.42	IX

Various surface embellishment techniques can be used on the western dresses. Fig. 2 reveals the preferences of respondents for surface embellishment techniques for western dresses. Embroidery as surface embellishment technique was rated first with mean score of 4.44 followed by painting and printing with mean score of 3.50 and 2.98 and was given second and third ranks, respectively.

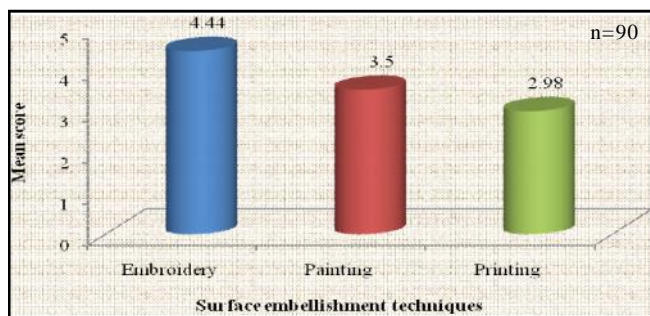


Fig. 2 : Preferences of respondents for surface embellishment techniques in western dresses

Table 6 shows the preferences of respondents for surface embellishments in western dresses. It was found that lace was most preferred surface embellishments with mean score of 7.99 followed by swarovski and sequins at second and third rank with mean score of 7.92 and 7.89, respectively. Glitters with mean score 3.42 were least preferred as surface embellishments. Similar results were also reported by Kaur (2003) in her study.

### Conclusion :

The data related to preferences of the respondents for various types of silhouettes revealed that A-line was most preferred silhouette followed by balloon and sheath which were given second and third rank, respectively. It

was observed that georgette and cotton fabrics were given first and second rank, respectively. Crepe fabric was least preferred by the respondents. Black colour was most preferred followed by red and white colours which were given second and third ranks, respectively. Both single and two coloured combinations were preferred by majority of the respondents. Preferences regarding constructional features show that gathers with elastic, knife pleats, pin tucks, round shape yoke and gathered ruffles were most preferred. For surface embellishments techniques, embroidery was most preferred and for surface embellishments, laces, swarovski, sequins, crystals and binding were preferred by the respondents.

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