



## Impact of training on consumers awareness regarding woolen garments purchase

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### ABSTRACT

The present study was undertaken to create consumer awareness through appropriate literature. A total of 50 respondents were selected from different colonies of Karnal. Training was imparted to all the respondents for creating awareness regarding woolen garments purchase. There was significant gain in knowledge of consumers regarding terms used on labels, symbols used on labels, method of judging weave quality, colour fastness, composition and size, assessing quality of woolen garments, advantage of having cash memo, type of relief consumer court can give, whom to be contacted for complaint and how to file a complaint in consumer forum after the training of the respondents.

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### INTRODUCTION

Clothes are helpful in determining one's first impression on others. A vast range of variety of woolen garments is at disposal for consumers. This is surely the result of rapidly growing garment industry that provides the consumer with a large supply of unlimited varieties of woolen garments, adding still newer ones everyday. With such a large varieties in hand, it becomes really difficult for a consumer to assess the quality of a garment and to compare it with others.

The manufacturers are cheating the consumers as there is no commonly recognizable standardization mark in the case of textiles as in case of food items, so a consumer can be easily cheated in the market.

Ministry of textiles organized a consumer awareness campaign on textiles in 2003. The topic of discussion was "Important information for consumers". It reported that the consumers have a right to be informed about the quality parameters and other essential information of all textile items for the angle of consumer protection concepts. Therefore at the time of purchase of textile products the consumers may satisfy themselves that they are correctly informed by the traders/ dealers, shopkeepers

etc. about the quality parameters and other essential information and whether the statutory markings/ labels were stamped on the textile items by the manufacturer. The consumers should satisfy themselves that they are buying the right thing and not spurious or defective or sub standard textile items. The list of do's and don'ts was also issued for the consumers so that any unscrupulous trader or manufacturer does not deceive them.

The consumers therefore need to be well informed about the different kinds of fabrics that are available and their care and maintenance. Since woolen garments in varying prices are available in market, it leads to confusion in the mind of consumers. In addition, the absence of any stamped markings and labels, retailers further try to confuse and misguide the consumers so as to sell their products.

Besides making a wise selection, it is equally important for the consumers to know about the proper usage, care and maintenance of the woolen garments. In today's competitive market, the consumers need to be aware of prevailing fraudulent practices, the right to information and redress. Also consumers are not aware of the labels available on the woolen

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garments. They often face a lot of inconvenience due to labels because the information given on them is not appropriate. It is imperative to study the labels so that consumers can be made aware of the same and they can understand the standardized laws of labeling. Considering all these facts the present study was conducted to create consumer awareness through appropriate means.

## METHODOLOGY

Karnal city was selected as the locale of study because of ease in accessibility. Efforts were made to take different colonies so that the sample could be true representation of the population.

The respondents for the study were both men and women as both were usually involved equally in purchase decision. Hence, both need to be educated about labels to be able to make the wise purchase. A total of 50 respondents were selected.

A knowledge inventory was prepared to study the existing knowledge level of consumers about labels for garments purchase. For construction of knowledge inventory, information available on labels and literature was collected from Manak Bhawan (Bureau of Indian Standards), books and journals to be utilized. Knowledge statements for all the domains was developed separately. The content of knowledge statements composed of questions called items which was compiled in consultation with specialists. Due care was taken to include all the pertinent informations about different domains. After pretest, necessary additions and deletions were made. The respondents were asked to answer each item in dichotomized categories of Yes/No or correct/incorrect and the score was assigned 1 and 0. The inventory was administered by personal interview method.

To create awareness and improve knowledge level regarding woolen garments and their purchase, lectures cum demonstrations were made to all the respondents.

Written materials like pamphlets, charts and booklets were prepared using the literature collected from books, journals, websites and library of Manak Bhawan (BIS). Information received from interview was used as a guideline in preparation of the educational material.

Existing knowledge level of respondents regarding woolen garments purchase, associated problems and knowledge about consumer courts and associations/ organizations was measured using self structured knowledge inventory.

Post – exposure knowledge level of the respondents was measured 30 days after exposure using the same knowledge inventory which was used to measure the

existing knowledge level of consumers regarding woolen garments and their purchase.

The collected data were analysed in the light of information collected from various sources. It was then compiled and tabulated to draw the meaningful inferences. Paired ‘t’ test was applied to test the significance of gain in knowledge by respondents after exposure to training. The following formula was used:

$$t = \frac{\bar{d} \sqrt{n}}{S}$$

where,

$\bar{d}$  = The mean of the differences

$n$  = Number of observations

$S$  = Standard deviation of the differences

which can be calculated by the following formula:

$$S = \sqrt{\frac{\sum d^2 - n(d)^2}{n-1}}$$

$\sum d^2$  = Summation of squares of differences

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study as well as relevant discussion have been presented below:

### Knowledge regarding woolen garments purchase:

Existing knowledge level of consumers regarding woolen garments:

The data presented in Table 1 clearly indicate that 44 per cent of the respondents had medium knowledge regarding purchase of woolen garments followed by 40 per cent, who had low knowledge. Only 16 per cent had high knowledge regarding purchase of woolen garments. It can be concluded from the data that maximum number of consumers had low knowledge regarding woolen garments. Similar results were reported by Parashar (1999).

Impact of training on knowledge level of consumers regarding woolen garments:

It is evident from Table 2 that before training, out of

**Table 1: Existing knowledge level of consumers regarding woolen garments**

Knowledge level	Number of respondents
Low (<80)	20(40)
Medium (80-100)	22(44)
High (> 100)	8(16)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

**Table 2: Impact of training on knowledge level of consumers regarding curtains and upholstery**

Knowledge level	Number of respondents	
	Pre	Post
Low (<80)	20(40)	-
Medium (80-100)	22(44)	-
High (>100)	8(16)	50(100)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage

50 only 8 respondents had high level of knowledge. Twenty two respondents had medium level of knowledge and 20 respondents had low level of knowledge regarding woolen garments whereas, after training all the respondents had high level of knowledge. It can be concluded that training was very effective and beneficial for the respondents. Similar results were also reported by Pankaj (1998) and Parashar (1999).

### Measurement of awareness:

Knowledge gain regarding labels:

There was significant gain in knowledge of consumers regarding terms used on labels, sizes used on labels, information used on labels and symbols used on labels after the training of the respondents (Table 3). Similar results were also reported by Pankaj (1998) and Parashar (1999).

Knowledge gain regarding quality assessment:

Gain in knowledge of consumers regarding method of judging weave quality, colour fastness, composition and size was significant after the training because earlier they were not knowing these methods. (Table 3). Pankaj (1998) and Parashar (1999) also reported similar results.

Knowledge gain regarding selection of woolen garment:

Gain in knowledge of consumers regarding selection of appropriate size of woolen garments, knowing defects in woolen garments and assessing qualities of woolen garments was significant after the training to the respondents (Table 3).

Knowledge gain regarding buying from a particular shop:

Gain in knowledge of consumers regarding pros and cons of buying from different places *i.e.* departmental store, retail showroom, footpath shop, fixed price shop and cooperative stores was significant after the training to the respondents (Table 3).

Knowledge gain regarding advantage of having cash memo:

Gain in knowledge of consumers regarding advantages of having cash memo was significant after the training to the respondents (Table 3).

**Table 3: Knowledge gain after training**

Knowledge level	Pre-exposure mean score	Post-exposure Mean score	Gain mean score	t <sub>cal</sub>
<b>Regarding labels</b>				
Usefulness of labels	3.00	3.00	-	-
Terms used on labels	10.18	17.00	6.82	21.291*
Sizes used on labels	4.50	8.20	3.70	29.516*
Information used on labels	7.56	17.00	9.44	21.874*
Symbols used on labels	1.50	17.34	15.84	34.293*
<b>Regarding quality assessment</b>				
Method of judging weave quality	2.10	3.14	1.04	21.157*
Method of judging colour fastness	2.54	3.00	0.46	5.996*
Method of judging composition	2.74	5.80	3.06	27.283*
Method of judging size	3.40	4.00	0.60	6.332*
<b>Regarding selection of woolen garment</b>				
Selection of appropriate size	7.78	11.46	3.68	21.050*
Defects in woolen garments	13.08	19.50	6.42	20.505*
Qualities of woolen garments	23.62	29.00	5.38	17.567*
<b>Regarding buying from a particular shop</b>				
	8.42	10.00	1.58	9.762*
<b>Regarding advantage of cash memo</b>				
	5.40	6.00	0.60	5.422*
<b>Regarding complaint</b>				
	4.64	9.00	4.36	22.081*

\*Gain in knowledge is significant at 0.05 level

t<sub>cal</sub> Calculated value for 't'

Knowledge gain regarding complaint:

Gain in knowledge of consumers to know the type of relief consumer court can give, whom to be contacted for complaint and how to file a complaint in consumer forum was significant after the training to the respondents (Table 3).

From the above results it can be concluded that the training was very effective in improving the knowledge of consumers regarding woolen garments purchase. Similar results were reported by Jacob (1992) and Singh (2002).

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