

Development of suitable functional clothing for pregnant women and assessment of its preferences

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ABSTRACT

Maternity clothing has a niche market in today's fashion era because of increase number of women worker with the attitude of being well dressed during pregnancy also as at any other time in their life. Thus, there is great need to design clothing for pregnant women. In the present study, the researcher market survey was conducted about availability of maternity clothing and satisfaction of pregnant women with these clothes. Further, based on the findings of the survey, there was designed and developed functional clothing for pregnant women. and recorded preferences of pregnant women towards developed clothing. The data revealed that maternity *kameez* with kali pattern; half umbrella pattern and 'side tie sting' pattern were more liked by pregnant women. Developed functional maternity *kameezes* were found highly suitable among pregnant women in terms of suitability of structural features, functional aspects, selection of materials and colour combinations used.

KEY WORDS : Functional, Maternity clothing, Preferences

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Women and fashion are inseparable and women's clothing is getting even more innovative with every passing year. Clothing contributes to social comfort when it helps feel as one "fit in" with others in a group so that one can interact easily. Uncomfortable clothes can take away the joy of living. This is equally true for special groups, whose needs are greater because they need more comfort and convenience as compared to normal people to become independent. Role of maternity clothes is very important when there is a question of happiness of pregnant women. Maternity clothes have special significance in woman's life as pregnancy is the important period of their lives to which lots of their dreams are attached. Today's women are not only engaged with household work but also work outside for their jobs, social service and participate in social gatherings. During pregnancy period they feel hesitation to face public.

Good maternity clothes are very important as pregnant women feel confident and relaxed by using it. Maternity clothes cater to the need of the gradually changing shape of woman's body during the pregnancy especially the second and third trimester of pregnancy when the growth of the baby inside the womb shows itself in the bumps and tummy of the pregnant women. Maternity clothes do not mean oversized and loose dresses. Designers may put their best creativity to

make maternity clothes comfortable, trendy and good looking.

The present study was undertaken to study the availability of appropriate functional clothing in the market and satisfaction of pregnant women with available maternity clothes. Further, based on the findings of the survey, the researchers designed and developed functional clothing for pregnant women. and recorded preferences of pregnant women towards developed clothing.

RESEARCH METHODS

The present study was carried out at Udaipur city of Rajasthan. Ten marketing personnel were selected to know the availability of maternity clothing in local market. To know the satisfaction with available maternity clothing and needs and requirements towards developing functional maternity clothing, 30 female pregnant respondents were selected from the Sanjeevani Child and Maternity Hospital, Udaipur. Pre-tested structured interview schedule was used for getting the complete and desired information. The functional garments were given to the respective respondents for wear trial of a period of three consecutive days to assess the acceptability and preferences. The frequency, percentage, mean percentage score (MPS) and acceptability index was calculated to analyse the data.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The following section contains the outcome of the major observations made during the study. The findings of the present study are discussed here below:

Satisfaction with available maternity clothes:

Table 1 shows that 56.6 per cent respondents reported that maternity clothes were not easily available in the market as there was no particular shop for maternity wear garments in the city however remaining 43.33 per cent respondents said that maternity clothes (Liengeries and feeding gowns) were available in the local market.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to availability of maternity clothes (n=30)

Sr. No.	Variable	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	Easily available	Nil	-
2.	Available	13	43.33
3.	Not available	17	56.67

Satisfaction with material, constructional and functional details of garment :

Table 2 shows that majority of respondents (73.33 per cent) were satisfied with material used in maternity garment while remaining 26.67 per cent respondents were less satisfied. Regarding the constructional details it was found that 46.6 per cent respondents were found satisfied with length of the garment, 40 per cent respondents were found less satisfied and 13.33 per cent respondents were not satisfied with length of garment. 63.33 per cent respondents were not satisfied with garment fittings and 36.67 per cent respondents were less satisfied.

An equal per cent of all the respondents (30%) were satisfied and not satisfied with length of sleeve in

maternity gowns, remaining 40 per cent respondents were found less satisfied with length of sleeve.

Majority of respondents (76.67%) were not satisfied with fitting of sleeve, 16.7 per cent respondents were less satisfied and remaining 6.67 per cent respondents were satisfied with fitting of sleeve in maternity gowns with regards to neck line shape, 40 per cent respondents were less satisfied, 36.7 per cent respondents were satisfied and remaining 23.33 per cent respondents were not satisfied with varieties of neck line shapes available in maternity garments. Similarly, 56.7 per cent respondents were less satisfied with size of neck, 26.67 per cent respondents were satisfied and remaining 16.67 per cent respondents were not satisfied with size of neck line. They wanted medium sized, broad neckline in maternity garments.

Data related to functional details showed that 63.33 per cent respondents were not satisfied with type of fasteners used and remaining 36.67 per cent respondents were less satisfied. Majority of respondents (70%) were not satisfied with fullness in garments and 30 per cent respondents were less satisfied because the maternity gowns which were available in the market have not appropriate fullness.

Overall satisfaction with present wardrobe:

Fig. 1 shows that over all 24.44 per cent respondents were satisfied with material of garment, constructional and functional details, 35.93 per cent respondents were less satisfied and nearly 39.63 per cent respondents were not satisfied. Hence, need arises to train and educate the pregnant and lactating women for the proper selection of the garments based on their requirement to gain maximum satisfaction.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to satisfaction with material, constructional and functional details of garment (n=30)

Sr. No.	Aspect	Satisfied		Less satisfied		Not satisfied	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	Material of garment	22	73.3	8	26.7	-	-
2.	Constructional details						
	Length of garment	14	46.7	12	40	4	13.33
	Garment fitting	-	-	11	36.7	19	63.33
	Length of sleeve	9	30	12	40	9	30
	Fitting of sleeve	2	6.7	5	16.7	23	76.67
	Neckline shape	11	36.7	12	40	7	23.33
	Size of neck	8	26.6	17	56.7	5	16.67
3.	Functional details						
	Type of fastener used	-	-	11	36.7	19	63.33
	Fullness in the garment	-	-	9	30	21	70

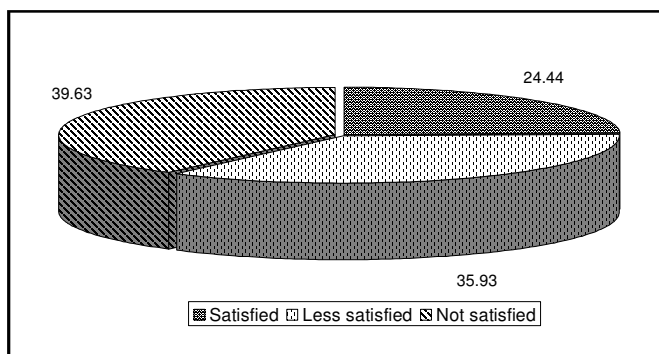


Fig. 1: Overall satisfaction with present wardrobe

Needs and requirements of pregnant women for developing maternity clothing:

Table 3 (a) and (b) show that majority of respondents (90 per cent) preferred cotton fabric because they feel cool (92.59%), comfortable (100%), easy availability (88.89%), within budget (66.67%), easy to care (96.29%) and its absorbency (100%).

Next to cotton fabric, 26.67 per cent respondents' preferred hosiery fabric due to its known characteristics of comfort (100%), absorbency (62.5%), stretchability (100%) and wrinkle free (37.5%). Blended fabric was also favoured by 23.33 per cent respondents because it was easily available (71.49%), according to budget (85.71%), easy to care (71.49), warmth (42.86%) and wrinkle free (71.49%) also.

Table 3(a): Distribution of respondents according to type of material preferred for clothing (n=30)

Sr. No.	Type of material	Respondents	
		F	%
1.	Cotton	27	90.00
2.	Hosiery	8	26.67
2.	Synthetic	-	-
4.	Blended	7	23.33

*Multiple responses

Table 3(b): Distribution of respondents by type of fabric preferred and its reason (n=30)

Sr. No.	Reasons for preferences	Cotton		Hosiery		Synthetic		Blended	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	Feel cool	25	92.59	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.	Feel comfortable	27	100	8	100	-	-	-	-
3.	Easily available	24	88.89	-	-	-	-	5	71.49
4.	Acc. to budget	18	66.67	-	-	-	-	6	85.71
5.	Easy to care	26	96.29	-	-	-	-	7	71.49
6.	Absorbent	27	100	5	62.5	-	-	-	-
7.	Give warmth	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	42.86
8.	Easily stretchable	-	-	8	100	-	-	-	-
9.	Wrinkle free	-	-	3	37.5	-	-	7	71.49
Not preferred									

*Multiple responses

Table 4 shows that 70 per cent respondents preferred kali pattern, 63.33 per cent respondents preferred any other style category in which they demanded umbrella cut pattern and dress with appropriate fullness, 30 per cent respondents preferred normal style pattern category and only 13.33 per cent respondents preferred *angrakha* pattern.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to preference of dress pattern (n=30)

Sr. No.	Pattern of dress	Respondents	
		F	%
1.	Kali pattern	21	70.00
2.	<i>Angrakha</i> pattern	4	13.33
2.	Normal style	9	30.00
3.	Any other style	19	63.33






*Multiple responses

The specifications of five selected *kameez* designs are as follows: These five functional maternity *kameezes* were developed by the researchers using standard construction techniques (Plate I).

These five developed functional maternity *kameez* were given to the respective five respondents for a period of three consecutive days for wear trial to find out their relative ranking, preferences and acceptability. In order to assess the preferences and acceptability of developed functional maternity *kameez*, a rating performa was developed based on five points rating scale and was given to respondents. The responses derived for each *kameez* were coded and presented in Table 5. The Table 5 depicts the mean percentage score of selected five functional *kameez* for pregnant women.

Researchers were curious to find which functional maternity *kameez* got maximum score, it was interesting to record that design sketch code-D from the category of

Plate 1: Sketches of functional maternity kameez for pregnant women

Design codes	Sketches for pregnant women	Design features
A.		Functional maternity kameez with gathers at centre front Front- U shape yoked neckline with gathers at centre front embellishment by decorative button. Back- plain with round shape neckline. Puff sleeve with elastic. Little longer than knee length
B.		Functional maternity kameez with nepha strip and tie sting Front- round shape neckline, nepha strip and tie string at waist for comfort and fullness, button and buttonhole up to waist with tucks used on both side of button strip, contrast strip for aesthetic appeal. Back-plain with round shape neckline. Puff sleeve with elastic.
C.		Functional maternity kameez with umbrella cut pattern Front-U shape neck line with printed yoke at neck embellished with decorative button. Back- plain with U shape neckline. Short length umbrella sleeve Little longer than knee length
D.		Functional maternity kameez with Kalidar pattern Front-round shape neckline, kali used on both side, chanderi (thin golden ribbon) used on each and every kali, and sleeve, decorative belt at waist, decorative yoke at neck. Back- plain with U shape neckline. Plain sleeve embellished with chanderi .
E.		Functional maternity kameez with side tie sting pattern Front-U shape neckline, decorative lace on neck and side panel, addition of extra fabric for fullness, tie sting adjusting fullness Back- plain with U shape neckline. Puff sleeve

No.	Design code	No. 1	No. 2	No. 3	No. 4	No. 5
1.	18 (17%)	19 (16%)	20 (16%)	21 (17%)	22 (18%)	23 (19%)
2.	17 (15%)	20 (16%)	21 (17%)	22 (18%)	23 (19%)	24 (20%)
3.	16 (14%)	18 (15%)	19 (16%)	20 (16%)	21 (17%)	22 (18%)
4.	19 (16%)	21 (17%)	22 (18%)	23 (19%)	24 (20%)	25 (21%)
5.	19 (16%)	21 (17%)	22 (18%)	23 (19%)	24 (20%)	25 (21%)

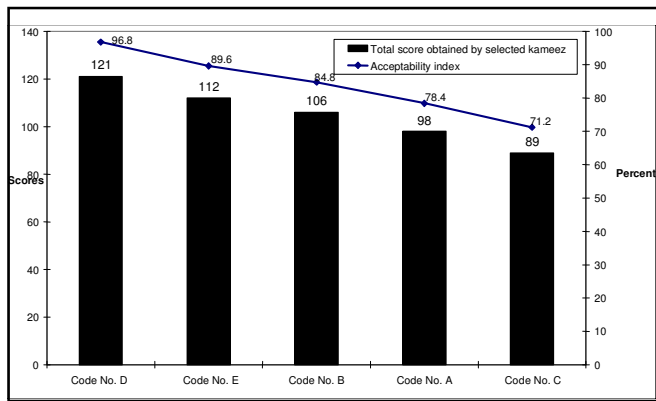


Fig. 2 : Mean score of developed five functional *kameez* for relative ranking (*Kameez* for pregnant women)

'Designs for pregnant women' secured the highest score of 121 point out of 125 points.

Table 5 reveals that design sketch code- E stood next to sketch of functional *kameez* code - D with score of 112 points. Functional *kameez* with design code-B stood next to sketch of functional *kameez* code-E with a score of 106 points. Functional *kameez* code-A stood next to sketch of functional *kameez* code-B with a score of 98 points. Functional *kameez* code-C stood next to sketch of functional *kameez* code-A.

Conclusion:

Thus, it can be concluded that developed functional maternity *kameezes* were found highly acceptable among pregnant women in terms of suitability of structural features, functional aspect, selection of material and colour

combination used. It can be recommended from the present study that maternity garments with functional feature are very much required there can be "Special maternity stores" in each town/ city. The developed designs can be used by garment manufacturing units to serve this special group of consumers who have specific needs of comfortable garments which can be worn with ease and fulfill their functional need.

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