

Two faced outfits for school going girls

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ABSTRACT

Clothing is an integral inseparable part of mankind that meets the basic necessity along with food and shelter and even denotes wealth, power, position and mode of adornment. Clothing has become a preferred means of individual expression and economic concerns, and it is within this context the researcher planned the concept of developing 'Two faced outfits' could be worn two ways. There is no true "inside out" to a reversible outfit, since either way it gives a fashionable appearance. Hence, the present study is taken up to design two faced outfits for school going girls and appraise the acceptance and calculate the cost of production of these designer's outfits. The methodology consisted of survey and experimental procedures. Keeping in mind the colour preference by the school going girls mood, swatch, colour and illustration board were prepared prior to product development. Three sets of skirt – top on the basis of standard measurements. The cost of production was calculated and the acceptance for the outfits was assessed by four categories of respondents. The result revealed that irrespective of the categories of the respondents', the most accepted designer's two faced outfit was wrap around skirt – strap top, followed by circular skirt – sling top finally the godet skirt – halter top. These outfits provide greater scope for mix and match and pair off outfits that are remarkably cost effective. This study further throw light on designing reversible winter clothes for kids, special clothes for physically challenged, expectant and lactating mothers as well senior citizens; a trust area for apparel industry and a challenge for commercial production.

KEY WORDS: Design forecasting, Reversible clothing, Fashion trend, Children clothing, Colour and cost.

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Clothing is an integral and inseparable part of mankind that meets the basic necessity of life. The universal truth is clothing along with food and shelter has been recognized as one of the primary needs of human being in all parts of the world all through the recorded time and probably even to denote wealth, power, position and mode of adornment. Clothing provides a means of self-expression, aesthetic enjoyment, identity, conformity, socio-economic status, prestige, individuality, personality and so on. Clothing is distinct from its functionality, structural and decorative designs. Whatever be the priorities, clothing remains as an essential element necessary for human well being.

School going children between the age group of 6-13years, also called as elementary school age and gang age, have very soft skin and clothing plays an important role at this period. Clothes should be selected primarily on the basis of comfort, texture, ease and care; where comfort depends on many factors viz., fibre content, texture, physical characteristics of the material, stitch, size, fit and ease. Focus needs to be thrown on weight of

the garment, placket opening, fasteners, embellishments rather decorations while purchasing garments for children.

A reversible garment is an outfit that can be worn two ways. There is no true 'inside out' to a reversible garments, since either way it gives a fashionable appearance. Reversible garments have some features unlike other types of garments. The reversible garment is sewn together by employing different type / style of stitching method. These garments rely on some feature of a bi-panel construction, with each panel reversibly or irreversibly connected to the other at or near and around the periphery. The simple plans of turning the garments 'inside out' accomplishes the reversal and allow it to be worn as a second garment alone or in combination. Making a garment reversible was a way to double its use and / or provide the possibility of a different look without a similar increase in cost. Advantages shall be achieved both in garment durability and garment versatility. A reversible garment could be worn two ways and exhibit totally a good appearance.

Two faced outfits have been designed for the school

age girls of 6-13 years to meet the demand of variety. These two faced skirts can be worn as two dresses though stitched into single and also has provision for mix and match.

Hence, an attempt was made to conduct a study on two faced outfits for school going girls with the following objectives: to design and construct the two faced outfits and to assess the acceptance for designers outfits

RESEARCH METHODS

The study was conducted in Hubli-Dharwad corporation area. The study was categorised into two parts *viz.*, (A) survey method and (B) experimental procedures. The survey method included three parts *viz.*, the first part was focused on gathering information regarding the availability of ready to wear garments in local market and the respondents were shop owners (50) of exclusive shops on children's wear; the 60 mothers of school going girls (30 each from rural and urban) were interviewed to elicit the information on preference of garments style, fibre content, seasonal clothes, neckline style and decoration for their daughters in the second part of the survey. However, it was felt necessary to find out the preference for colour by the school going girls, thus a small activity was conducted where the girls were given full freedom to select the colour of their choice from nine balls of different colours. This activity was repeated second and third time by placing the square boxes and balloons respectively, to find out the validity of selecting the same colour each time by the same girls. Three chances were given for each girl to pick and choose each object. This activity was visually observed and recorded in order to find out colours most preferred by the school going girls of 60 each from rural and urban localities. The results of the survey were considered in further study while sourcing the fabric to design and develop two faced outfits.

On the other hand the experimental procedure encompassed design forecasting *i.e.*, preparation of mood, swatch, colour and illustration board; sourcing materials, drafting, adaptation, cutting, sewing the outfits and their assessment for acceptance by mothers of school going girls (30), Home scientists (50), Textile experts (30) and school going girls (50) followed by cost estimation of each dress.

The designer in the present study has forecasted designing of occasional wear, two faced outfits for school going girls for spring summer season.

Preparation of mood board:

'Mood board' is a visual form of expression. It is basically collage of items such as photographs, sketches,

clippings, fabric swatches and colour samples. A mood board can be actual or virtual, usually planned and developed by designers working in fashion field and interior designing.

Mood board is a gateway for designers to present their taste on a theme to clients. In the present study, the researcher focused on 'occasional wear' for spring summer season (first 6 month of fashion year) as clients were school going girls. The theme of the mood board focuses as 'activities of school going girls'; the photographs and sketches of garments, clippings spot lighting on girls play, girls involved in painting, drawing, dancing, singing, playing in sand and with animals, cooking and so on were sourced and collaged. It was tried to bring the concept of girls belonging to this age group tend to soil their outfits easily thus, keep demanding for variety of dresses. In view of this, it was planned to design and construct two faced outfits for school going girls that can be mix-and-matched and used reversibly.

Preparation of swatch and colour board:

The colours were pre-decided by the designer based on the survey results keeping the most preferred colours in mind, several fabric swatches were sourced; swatches are cuttings of fabrics indicate style of garment to be constructed with it. Swatches may be small snipping or may be large enough as desired by the designer to reflect a print repeat, embroidery detail or trims.

Preparation of illustration board:

On the design sheet, it is important, to indicate flats or 2D specification drawings. Flats are miniature drawings of garment pieces drawn flat on table. Specification drawing or specs as they are called as small proportionate drawings drawn according to scale of the style furnished. Illustration board talks of fashion drawings of human forms (women, men or kids) with garments rendered on it to give 3D image. Illustration could be hand rendered or worked with software on system. Illustration boards contain the details of style of the garment, value addition and accessories used to design a particular dress by the designer.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings obtained from the present investigation are presented below:

Design forecasting:

The designer in the present study forecasted 'Two faced outfits for school going girls' for the 'spring summer' season, and the mood, swatch and colour, illustration

boards were developed based on the said theme (Fig. 1 and 2).



Fig. 1: Mood board



Fig. 2: Fabric swatch and colour board

Fabric and colour selection:

On the basis of the survey results soft cotton fabric of pink, yellow and orange colours were selected to construct two faced skirts for the school going girls.

Constructional details:

Three pair of skirt – tops were constructed where the skirt alone was reversible.

Pattern I: Godet skirt with halter top

Godet skirt:

The godet skirt is stitched with waist belt and yoke.

The basic material sourced for skirt was cotton cloth of two colours yellow and orange; each colour formed the main skirt on face and reverse sides, respectively and its counter colour was wedged as godets. This created a beautiful colour combination of yellow skirt with orange godet and orange skirt with yellow godets.

Halter top:

The halter top was constructed in yellow colour cotton cloth. The top was simple, with round front neckline extended with strings to tie as back neckline. The back was held in position by elastic. Patch pocket was the value addition for halter top.

Pattern II: Circular skirt with sling top:

Circular skirt

The circular skirt provided maximum fullness, stitched without placket, instead with elasticide belt. The soft cotton cloth was patterned in white lozenges against green and orange grounds were stitched forming face and reverse sides into a circular skirt. The waist belt and loops matched the ground colour.

Sling top:

A pair of strapped sling top in cotton constructed with side seams secured with loop and strings. 'Appliqué' was the value addition made on it.

Pattern III: Wrap around skirt with strap top:

Wrap around skirt:

A white cotton material with large multi-coloured circles formed the face and plain pink the reverse side. The waist belt was large enough to go around the waist and secured at the back. Painting was the value addition.

Strap top:

The pink cotton strap top was stitched with side cuts in combination with skirt material. Painting was the value addition worked on both front and back sides of the top.

In the present study, three sets of skirt and top designed and constructed were in different colour combinations, the colours considered, chosen and selected according to the survey results. However, it was important to find out the most accepted rather preferred skirt – top among the three sets with respect to colour combination.

Table 1 depicts the results on the most preferred skirt – top by the mothers, home scientist and textile experts. It was found that wrap around skirt with strap top was the most preferred outfit by all the categories (80-82%) of the respondents and stood with I rank

because of the beautiful cloth having white background with large circle in pleasant colours, appeared very elegant and decent as well alternative. The reverse side of this skirt was pink with beautiful floral painting on it. The entire skirt - top did give an appearance of pink, the colour most becoming for school going girls, followed by circular skirt, (II rank) the cloth with lozenges best suited patterns for school going children especially girls, because the design expressed simplicity, elegance and did not distract or distort the pattern/style of the garment. The godet skirt with halter top was given III rank. Godet is a triangular wedge inserted in the seam to add fullness at the flare, a high fashion effect to some extent compared to wrap around and circular skirts. The texture of the fabric was slightly coarser compared to other two skirt because of embroidery work, specially chosen to suit the godet style. Though all the three sets of outfits were scored as excellent and good by the respondents a meagre per cent (06.66%) of them indicated that godet skirt is 'fair' with respect to colour combination.

Every individual feels confident and self-sufficient when he/she feels comfortable in the garments.

Sometimes children do refuse to wear and accept the outfits by action if not verbally expressing their discomfort.

All types of clothes, fibre contents, styles of garments, value additions, and accessories may be accepted by every one but intensity always varies. Comfort is a multi facet factor expressed as physical and psychological garment ease that provides freedom and room for physical body movements; non irritant, smooth, soft, absorbent and breathable fabric provide total comfort to an individual. The seams, fullness, length, weight, drape, grain, fasteners, placket, ease are the constructional features that contribute to wear comfort.

It was arrived to find out the garment comfort featured with fabric parameters as well constructional details. Having explained and made known about this, the respondents expressed the views on the comfort properties of two faced outfits which have been presented in Table 2.

Irrespective of the category the respondents mentioned, wrap around skirt with strap top had maximum comfort (excellent, I rank) followed by circular skirt with sling top (II rank) and godet skirt with halter top (III rank).

Table 1: Preference for colour combination of designer's two faced outfits

Respondents	Patterns	Preference			Average	Rank
		Excellent	Good	Fair		
Mothers of school going girls (n ₁ = 30)	Godet skirt with halter top	11(36.66)	19(63.33)	--	1.3	III
	Circular skirt with sling top	15(50.00)	15(50.00)	--	2.5	II
	Wrap around skirt with strap top	24(80.00)	6(20.00)	--	2.8	I
Home scientists (n ₂ = 50)	Godet skirt with halter top	26(52.00)	24(48.00)	--	2.52	III
	Circular skirt with sling top	33(66.00)	17(34.00)	--	2.58	II
	Wrap around skirt with strap top	41(82.00)	9(18.00)	--	2.82	I
Textile experts (n ₃ = 30)	Godet skirt with halter top	10(33.33)	18(60.00)	2(06.66)	2.30	III
	Circular skirt with sling top	18(60.00)	12(40.00)	--	2.60	II
	Wrap around skirt with strap top	24(80.00)	6(20.00)	--	2.80	I

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

Table 2: Comfortability of the two faced outfits

Respondents	Patterns	Preference			Average	Rank
		Excellent	Good	Fair		
Mothers of school going girls (n ₁ = 30)	Godet skirt with halter top	16(53.33)	14(46.66)	--	2.53	III
	Circular skirt with sling top	18(60.00)	12(40.00)	--	2.60	II
	Wrap around skirt with strap top	21(70.00)	9(30.00)	--	2.70	I
Home scientists (n ₂ = 50)	Godet skirt with halter top	27(54.00)	22(43.00)	2(04.00)	2.54	III
	Circular skirt with sling top	36(72.00)	12(24.00)	2(04.00)	2.68	II
Textile experts (n ₃ = 30)	Wrap around skirt with strap top	39(78.00)	9(18.00)	2(04.00)	2.74	I
	Godet skirt with halter top	16(53.33)	11(36.66)	3(10.00)	2.40	III
	Circular skirt with sling top	19(63.33)	11(36.66)	--	2.60	II
	Wrap around skirt with strap top	24(80.00)	6(20.00)	--	2.80	I

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

Table 3: Overall appearance of designer's

Respondents	Patterns	Preference			Average	Rank
		Excellent	Good	Fair		
Mothers of school going girls (n ₁ = 30)	Godet skirt with halter top	19(63.33)	11(36.66)	--	2.63	II
	Circular skirt with sling top	20(66.66)	10(33.33)	--	2.66	III
	Wrap around skirt with strap top	23(76.66)	7(23.33)	--	2.76	I
Home scientists (n ₂ = 50)	Godet skirt with halter top	24(48.00)	24(48.00)	2(04.00)	2.44	III
	Circular skirt with sling top	34(68.00)	16(32.00)	--	2.68	II
	Wrap around skirt with strap top	37(74.00)	11(22.00)	2(04.00)	2.70	I
Textile experts (n ₃ = 30)	Godet skirt with halter top	14(46.66)	12(40.00)	4(13.33)	2.33	III
	Circular skirt with sling top	18(60.00)	12(40.00)	--	2.46	II
	Wrap around skirt with strap top	22(73.33)	8(26.66)	--	2.73	I

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

It is evident from Table that very meagre per cent of the home scientists (04.00%) mentioned that the comfort of the three outfits was just 'fair'. Infact, all the skirts were stitched by couture method, taking inseams without bulkiness, how ever the I rank was given to wrap around skirt may be because of sufficient fullness at the flare, easy to wrap and unwrap and easy to use as reversible, and attractive on either faces. Many time texture of the fabric do contribute to comfortability of the garment, which is evident from the godet skirt.

Overall appearance of a garment is expressed spontaneously looking at the aesthetic of properties. Overall it may be expressed as a total effect of fibre content, fabric type, colour, pattern / print; comfort features, style of the garment, suitability and compatibility with respect to garment style and client, launderability, care and maintenance and so on.

The respondents were given full freedom to express about the over all appearance of the outfits, who considered aesthetic, constructional, comfort and economic aspects of the garments. The results are presented in Table 3.

Among the three sets (Table 3) the most accepted and preferred outfit was wrap around skirt and strap top (mothers 76.66%, home scientists 74.00% and textile experts 73.33%) hence ranked as first. Though 46.00 per cent to 63.00 per cent respondents, irrespective of the category expressed godet skirt and halter top as excellent and was ranked as third in its overall appearance. Meanwhile circular skirt and sling top was scored as second by the respondents. The opinions of the school going girls were in line with the opinion of mother, home scientists and textile experts. Chakravarty and Kaur (2000), Choudhary and Baruah (2001) and Vimla and Ramalakshmi (2008) have also made some observations on designing comfort garments for school children.

Conclusion:

Three sets of skirt-tops were designed and developed for school going girls of 6-13 years, using standard measurement. Two faced effect rather reversible sequence was created only for skirts having two layers, stitched by couture method. The tops of respective skirts were of single layer. Adaptations by flat pattern technique with slash and spread method was adopted wherever necessary.

The acceptance for designer's two faced outfits for school going girls were evaluated by four categories of respondents viz., mothers of school going girls, home scientists, textile experts and school going girls. Among three outfits, wrap around skirt was rated as the best (I rank) with respect to colour combination, print, style features, comfortability between the upper and lower garment as expressed by all the three categories of respondents. All the reversible skirts were rated as comfortable with respect to fibre content, texture, breathability, absorbency, weight and constructional details. In a nut shell, the respondents rated the three 'either way' outfits viz., wrap around skirt, circular skirt and godet skirt as first, second and third, respectively.

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