

## A Study of eco friendly apparel brands in Tricity

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### SUMMARY

The present day fashions have undergone various modifications to introduce some of the best fashionable clothing for men and women. The days are gone when a garment was picked up from the shelf for its look or style alone, now consumers also look for eco friendliness of the garments. The latest change in fashion today is "Eco friendly fashion". The focus of this paper is to study the availability of categories of eco friendly garments in exclusive branded stores selling eco friendly apparel in the markets of Tricity. The paper also studies the sales promotion techniques of eco friendly apparel besides the customer's feedback regarding eco friendly clothing.

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Clothing today is a very important part of an individual's life as they contribute to his appearance and personality besides serving to protect the body. Clothes also contribute to the satisfaction of our desire for personal recognition (Ryan, 1966). Eco friendly clothing also called as Organic clothing is, any fabric grown by using organic practices without any use of pesticides, chemicals or artificial additives and are recycled and biodegradable. Some fibers and textiles that are common for eco friendly clothing are hemp, jute, organic cotton, organic linen, organic silk, organic wool, ramie, bamboo, hessian cloth, corn, soyabean, pineapple, lyocell, tencel, lycra, recycled cotton and recycled polyester etc. (Pandey *et al.*, 2010)

Eco fashion also called as sustainable fashion is a part of the larger trend, where a product is created and produced with consideration to the environmental and social impact throughout. In environmental friendly clothing the production processes involved are considered to be of less harm to the environment (Montero, 2009). There are various brands retailing eco friendly clothing in the market. Some of the National and International brands

producing eco friendly clothing for men are Van Heusen, Arrow, Allen solly, UV and W, Duke, Ed Hardy, Octave, Marks and Spencer, Woodland, Levis, Monte Carlo, Wills Lifestyle. National and International brands manufacturing eco friendly clothing for women are Madame, Woodland, Khadi, Fabindia, UV and W, Provogue, Wrangler, Punk, Lee cooper, Arrow, Colorplus, Neva, Wills lifestyle, Zara. Brands have now realised that, customers look for the performance characteristics besides cut, fit and design of the garment, and therefore they began to concentrate on eco friendly fashion (Taneja, 2009).

Eco labels guides the consumers and producers that the product is eco friendly and with fewer adverse environmental impacts. The Indian government launched Eco mark, in February 1991, with the earthen pot or matka as a symbol, it guarantees any product made, used or disposed off reduces the harm to the environment and the people. EU-eco label also known as "Flower" was introduced in 1992, to create awareness among the people that textile product is produced clean, not causing pollution and any health hazards and is eco friendly. The first Organic Exchange

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standard (OE-100) was developed in 2004, to support claims in 100% organic cotton. Global organic textile standards (GOTS) have been implemented since September 2006, to ensure organic status of textiles from harvesting of raw materials through environmentally and socially responsible manufacturing up to labeling. Oeko-tex standards 100 are related to global uniform testing and certification system for textile raw materials, intermediate and end products at all stages of production. (Pandey *et al.*, 2010).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Methodology is the scientific way of conducting any research in order that a study may be reliable and conducted with accuracy. Survey method was adopted to collect the required information as the present study could not be subjected to observation method.

Sample size consisted of shopkeepers of 8 exclusive branded stores selling eco friendly and other garments in Chandigarh, Panchkula and Mohali. List of the stores was procured by purposive sampling through survey of different markets in Tricity. The 4 men's wear apparel branded stores included were Arrow, Van Heusen, UV and W and Woodland, and 4 women's wear apparel branded stores undertaken for the study were Khadi, Fabindia, UV and W and Madame. Before data collection pre-testing was done on 2 men's wear and 2 women's wear apparel branded stores selling eco friendly and other apparel. From their feedback, required modifications were made in questionnaire and a final questionnaire was formulated. The number of stores taken for study was sufficient for the pre-testing of sample. The data was collected by administering the final questionnaire having clear and relevant questions to the shopkeepers of exclusive branded stores selling eco friendly and other garments in the Tricity. The data from the questionnaires was then quoted, tabulated and analysed for the interpretation of the results.

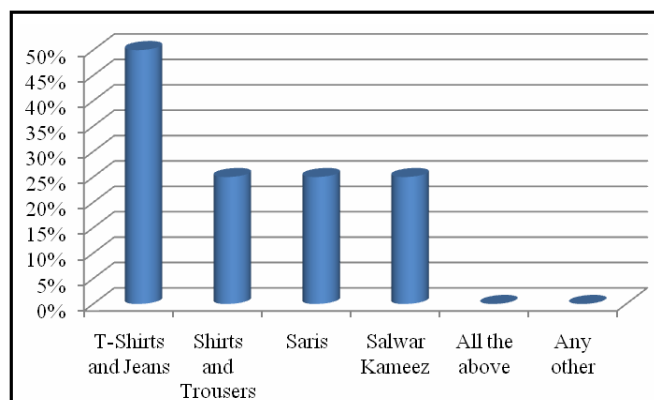
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the present investigation are summarized below:

### Availability of categories of eco friendly garments in branded apparel stores:

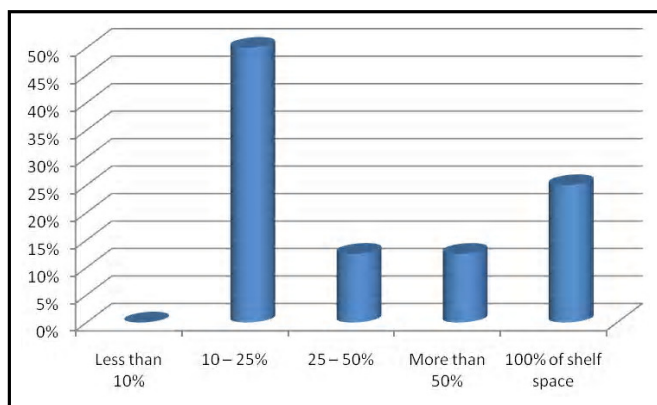
87.5% of the stores were retailing eco friendly women's wear, followed by 75% of the stores dealing in retail of men's wear and 25 % of the stores *i.e.* UV and W were dealing in retail of all categories of garments *i.e.* men's women's, and kid's wear. Lastly 12.5% of the

stores (*i.e.* UV and W) were into retail of Kid's wear. 50% of the stores were selling eco friendly T-Shirts and jeans, followed by 25% of the stores selling shirts and trousers. It was also observed that 25% of the stores were dealing with sale of saris and another 25% of the stores were selling eco friendly Salwar Kameez also. The results are shown in Fig. 1.



**Fig. 1: Showing distribution of the shopkeepers according to category of Eco friendly garments they were selling**

Majority of the stores *i.e.* 87.5% were not dealing with eco friendly running fabrics, and only 12.5% of the stores *i.e.* Khadi Ashram was dealing with the sale of eco friendly running fabrics. All of the stores had eco friendly garments made of organic cotton. 37.5% of the stores were also dealing with garments made of organic silk, followed by 25% of stores dealing with eco friendly garments made of organic linen. Only 12.5% of the store (*i.e.* Khadi Ashram) was also having eco friendly garments made from recycled wool. All the stores were dealing with the sale of eco friendly clothes in all sizes, *i.e.* Small, Medium, Large, X-Large and even plus sizes were also available. Eco friendly garments were available in many different styles and colours, as informed by the respondents of all the stores. Only 12.5% of stores *i.e.* Arrow brand quoted that blues and blacks were most popular colours in eco friendly garments. Further 12.5% of stores *i.e.* Van Heusen quoted that pinks were most preferred colour in eco friendly garments. 50% of the shopkeepers allotted 10-25% shelf space to eco friendly garments in their stores, whereas 25% of shopkeepers of UV&W stores allotted 100% of shelf space to eco friendly garments as it was an exclusive eco friendly store selling men's, women's and kid's wear garments. 12.5% of respondents from Van Heusen store allotted 25-50% of shelf space for eco friendly garments. Further 12.5% of respondents (*i.e.* from Khadi Ashram store) allotted more than 50% of shelf space. The results are given in Fig. 2.



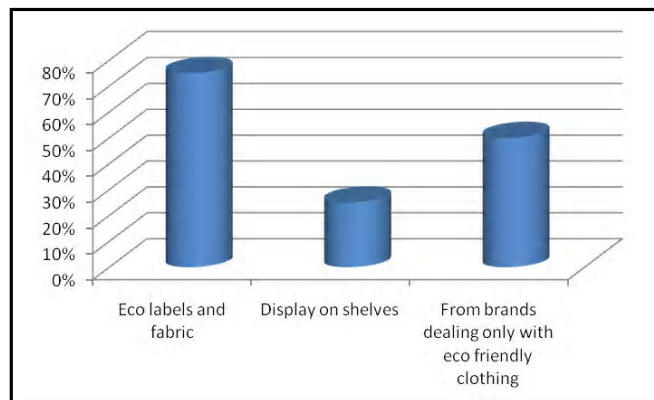
**Fig. 2:** Showing distribution of the shopkeepers according to the shelf space allotted by them to eco friendly garments in their stores

Majority of shopkeepers *i.e.* 75% had placed eco friendly garments at the place of maximum visibility and only 25% of the stores (as quoted by Madame and Woodland) placed it on display shelves like other products.

### Consumers of eco friendly garments and their feedback:

Majority of the shopkeepers *i.e.* 62.5% revealed that women consumers were more inclined to purchase eco friendly garments as they were more aware of eco fashion and only 37.5% of shopkeepers of Van Heusen, Arrow and Woodland stores responded that men usually purchased eco friendly garments from their stores. 87.5% respondents revealed that college goers were frequent visitors for their garments, followed by 62.5% of respondents who stated that teenagers were regular visitors for their garments. 25% of the respondents (from Van Heusen and Arrow stores) indicated that executives usually prefer to visit their stores for buying garments. Elderly persons usually paid visits for running fabrics and other garments to Khadi store. In Fabindia store, all the categories of visitors which comprised of teenagers, college goers, housewives, executives and elderly use to frequently visit the store to shop for clothing. Majority of the respondents *i.e.* 87.5% revealed that customers were attracted more to their stores after the introduction of eco friendly garments. Only 12.5% of shopkeepers of Arrow store stated that customers were not attracted much to their stores after the introduction of eco friendly line of apparel. Majority of the shopkeepers *i.e.* 75% revealed that the customers went for eco labels and fabrics while identifying a particular garment as eco friendly, whereas 50% of the shopkeepers felt that brands dealing only with eco friendly clothing were the key factor to identify eco friendliness of a particular garment.

According to 25% of the respondents (*i.e.* shopkeepers of Arrow and Madame stores), the consumers usually identify eco friendly garments from separate shelves meant only for such apparel. The results are shown with the help of a bar diagram in Fig. 3.

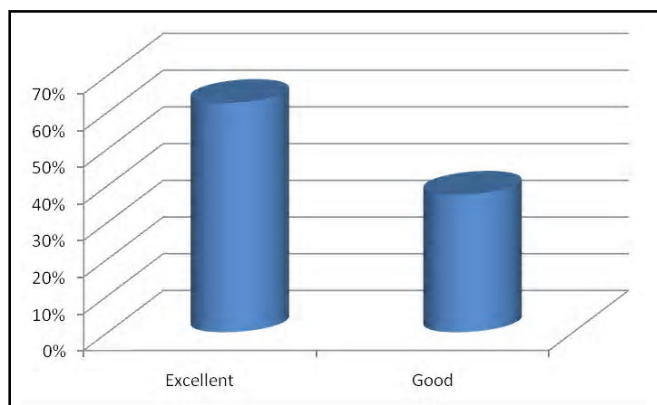


**Fig. 3:** Showing distribution of the shopkeepers according to the key to identification of eco friendliness of a particular garment by the customers

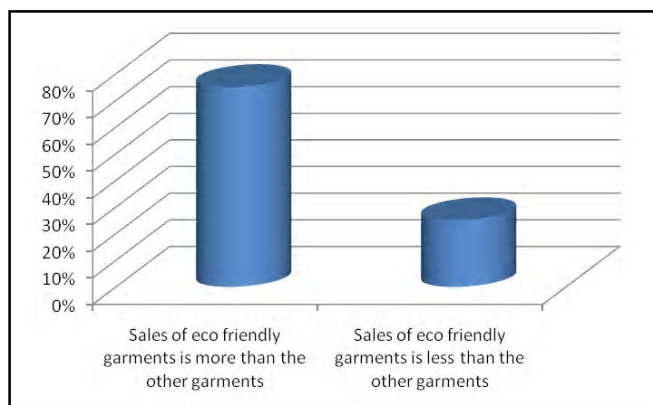
Majority of respondents *i.e.* 75% felt that customers usually buy eco friendly garments due to their awareness level, followed by 25% of the respondents from UV&W stores who stated that customers use to buy eco friendly garments due to feel good factor, eco friendly looks, awareness, health reasons. Lastly it was observed that 12.5% of the respondents from Madame quoted that customers purchased eco friendly garments due to feel good factor only.

Respondents from Woodland mentioned about health reasons and Khadi respondents indicated that eco friendly looks was the motive for buying such apparel. All of the shopkeepers also revealed that their customers were satisfied with the usage of eco friendly garments. According to majority of respondents *i.e.* 62.5%, the feedback of customers about eco friendly garments and its usage was excellent, followed by 37.5% of the shopkeepers of Van Heusen, Madame and Arrow stores quoted that their customers feedback for eco friendly garments was good. The results are shown with the help of a bar diagram given in Fig. 4.

87.5% of respondents did not get any suggestions from the users of eco friendly garments, whereas 12.5% of the shopkeepers of Arrow store revealed that had suggestions from their customers regarding government to promote eco friendly garments through advertising and also by exhibiting them in different collections and manufacturing them in variety of colours.



**Fig. 4:** Showing distribution of the shopkeepers according to the feedback of their customers about eco friendly garments



**Fig. 5:** Showing distribution of the shopkeepers according to the effect of off-season discounts on the sales volume of eco friendly garments

### Sales promotion techniques used:

Majority of the respondents *i.e.* 75% followed strategies like off-season discounts and festival discounts to increase the sales of eco friendly garments. Only 25% of the shopkeepers from Van Heusen and Arrow stores revealed that they used advertising, audio-visuals and posters to increase the sales of eco friendly garments. Majority of shopkeepers *i.e.* 75% responded said that there was no effect of off-season discounts on the sales volume of eco friendly garments, whereas according to 25% of the shopkeepers of UV and W stores stated that there was increase in percentage sales of eco friendly garments during off-season discounts. According to 75% of respondents the sales of eco friendly garments were more than other garments in their stores, whereas 25% of the shopkeepers of Van Heusen and Madame stores revealed that the sales of eco friendly garments were less than other garments in their stores. The results are shown with the help of a bar diagram given in Fig. 5.

All the shopkeepers responded that it was easy to sale eco friendly garments and their overall demand was growing everyday and they will maintain such trend in the market.

### Conclusion:

It can thus be concluded from the present study that there are various apparel brands dealing with retail of eco friendly garments. There is lack of awareness among people about eco fashion, as this is new in the market. So, the shopkeepers of different stores are not interested in expanding the range of eco friendly garments at present, but in the coming season, they will expand their

collection range as they felt that such apparel are sure to capture the market in future.

Therefore, it is necessary to create more awareness among consumers regarding eco fashion. More brands need to launch into manufacturing of green fashion to cater to the demands of customers and for the benefit of both humans and environment in the real sense.

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