

Designing of burkha using linen fabric with animal print

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■ **ABSTRACT** : A Burkha is an outer garment worn by women in Islamic tradition for the purpose of cloaking the entire body. The present study was conducted on the subjects who wear Burkha along with few objectives, fashion conscious wearer always demanding something new and innovative designer Burkha. The existing range of Burkha has wide variety but linen a skin friendly and comfortable fabric, has never been used for making Burkha and animal prints which has been a taboo for Muslim clothing. Therefore, this project is an effort to innovate designer Burkha with animal print carefully without hearing the Islamic religious norms. The designs were proposed, assessed, made into miniature samples, reassessed and finally made into prototype and then evaluated by the potent customers who showed inclination for buying such Burkhas.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Burkha, Animal print, Linen fabric, Design feature, Muslim clothing, Islamic tradition

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A Burqa (also translated Burkha, Burka or burqua) is an enveloping outer garment worn by women in Islamic tradition for the purpose of cloaking the entire body. It is worn over the usual daily clothing (Salwar Kameez) and removed when the women return to the sanctuary of the household (Das, 1982). The exact origin of the Burka is unknown, but similar forms of veiling have been worn by women in countries such as India, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Afghanistan since the beginning of the Muslim religion (Ahmed, 1992). The Quran, the holy book of Islam, directs believers to cover themselves and be humble before God.

Quran calls this mode of dressing "modest". Muslims male and female are expected to dress without exposure of intimate body parts. According to Quran, there are certain requirements for a women's dress to be Islamic.

- It must cover the whole body.
- It must not be tight or transparent.
- It must not delineate the parts of body, especially those parts that are sexually attractive.
- It must not be a dress that is usually worn by men.

It is also called Niqab which is derived from the Arabic word. The word is used both as noun and as an adjective. The term Niqab and Burkha are often used interchangeably. These

are the various part of Burkha:

Abaya/Jilbab :

The Arabic word Jilbab is the translated as "cloak. An Abaya or Jilbab is a loose outer garment like a cloak or coat that covers the whole body of a woman from the top to bottom and is an essential part of Islamic women clothing.

Under abaya cloth :

This category includes clothes to be worn under the abaya. The collection includes under-skirt, under-pants and slip dress.

Khimar :

A head covering dresses which have three types of Khimar. First the over head abaya which covers from head to heel, opened from front but closed with buttons or snaps and worn over regular clothes, second the Isdal which covers from head to heel but closed from front and third the regular khimar which covers from head to waist line.

Hijab and Shayala:

Hijabs are used to cover the head of Muslim women in

compliance to the modesty standard set by the Quran.

Hijab pins :

Beautiful sets of stylish hijab pins which helps to keep your hijab neatly fastened and prevent it from slipping.

There are innumerable styles of Niqāb and other facial veils worn by Muslim women around the world. Other less common and more cultural or national forms of Niqāb are as follows:

- The “Afghani” style Burqa, a long pleated gown that goes from the head to the feet with a small crocheted grill over the face. Contrary to popular belief, the Burqa is limited solely to Afghanistan and certain areas of Pakistan, although there are modified forms in Kashmir and amongst Afghani refugees; the vast majority of munaqabāt do not wear this item.
- The Pak Chadar, a unique innovation from Pakistan that is a triangle scarf with two additional pieces. A thin band on one edge is tied behind the head so as to keep the chadar on, and then another larger rectangular piece is attached to one end of the triangle and this is worn over the face.
- The simple hijāb wrapped, pinned or tied in a certain way so as to also cover the wearer’s face.

The Burkha comes in georgette, crepe, satin, crush and firdos. The words are as diverse Burkha carry Zardosi, Lace, Net, Hand embroidery, Sequins, Bead and stone works. Swarovski crystals are also available. Different hues like green, blue, magenta sky blue etc. are available with various designs. Changes in life style and fashions have also transformed the Burkha. Designer Burkhas are also popular gift for Muslim women. The Muslim clothing fashion is developing very fast in term of quality and style. Muslim clothing is now available almost in every colour and style and current fashion with traditional polyester made gown. Some of the famous fashion designer take Muslim clothing fashion seriously and work a lot in development of Muslim fashion designing.

Many famous designers who designed Muslim Burkhas those are now easily available on the online shop (Jain, 1986). There is a range of designer Burkha available from minimum to maximum covering in the Muslim fashion clothing. So, the present study focuses on the development of Burkhas using linen fabric which is printed with animal prints in order to improve the variety and comfort properties of the over garment. Linen is one of the oldest textile fibres. Linen has unparalleled characteristic. It has the feel of freshness and softness and also gives an air of satisfaction and peacefulness. Linen fabrics are very cool, absorbent than cotton, most comfortable apparel fabric, dries more quickly, stronger fibre, damp iron at high temperature wrinkle. And, range of animal print has been winning lot of appreciation in the fashion industry. It is mostly possessed by the fashion conscious women and girl who loves to wear something unusual and

uncommon. These animal printed Burkha are available in various sizes and colours.

Animal printed Burkha is a fashion trend that has steadily grown and will continue. One way that the animal print trend is developing is that it now includes other animal skins, for example, zebra, cheetah, ocelot, jaguar, cow, giraffe and tiger. Another way that this trend is growing in momentum is that more and more accessories have animal print textures. . Therefore, this study is an effort to innovate designer Burkha with animal print carefully without hearding the Islamic religious norms.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

An attempt was made to undertake the study on “Designing of Burkha using linen fabric with animal print. According to objectives of the study, the total work plan was divided into phases as under :

Phase 1st :

- Survey was conducted in Gorakhpur and Banasthali Vidyapith due to ease of approachability to the investigators.
- Sample sizes were 70, selected by the convenience sampling technique.
- Design sheets were designed using different silhouette, details, colour-combination, and animal prints using linen fabric.
- Analysis was based on wearer preferences and information.

Phase 2nd :

- To screen the proposed design with the help of consumer choice.
- To develop the miniature form of Burkha with the help of 1/4 scales.
- Each miniature form of Burkha were independently assessed and rated by the potent consumers in descending order to get consumer preference.
- If animal printed linen fabric was not easily available in market, then print was created through screen printing or tie and dye.
- To develop the selected design into readymade garment with specified design.

Phase 3rd :

- Finally prepared prototype was displayed and analyzed by potent consumer on the basis of colour, style, uniqueness and overall acceptability. 5 point rating scale was used for analysis:
Excellent-1, Very Good -2, Good-3, Average -4, Fair -5
- The costing of Burkha was done according to cost of raw material, labour cost and overhead charges

combined with 10 per cent profitability for evaluating the acceptability and marketing of Burkha.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study was undertaken with the objective of designing the Burkha using animal printed (which is more acceptable by wearer) fashion and comfortable linen fabric. Burkha is an over garment worn by women which belongs to the Islamic tradition so the data were collected by a sample of 70 Islamic Burkha wearing women.

The preliminary survey was conducted to determine respondent’s attitude toward designer Burkha in the light of Quran guidelines. Also the market was surveyed in Gorakhpur and Banasthali Vidyapith, to find out the latest trends in Burkha that have hit the market but they are not very popular among the masses and only black colour dominated all designs of Burkhas. This survey facilitates to give direction for designing so that, all the important features could be incorporated while developing the designer Burkhas.

As shown in Fig. 1, the respondents gave good response to the entire developed designed sheet when their preferences were based on 5 point rating scale from excellent to fair. The top 10 designs that were liked by most of the respondents were made into ¼ miniature samples. Preference percentages (Table 1) of selected prototypes/ designs are calculated as under:

Table 1 : Preference percentage of selected prototypes

| Design No. | Score received in percentage |
|------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 66.28 |
| 3 | 79.42 |
| 4 | 63.71 |
| 8 | 62 |
| 10 | 65.14 |
| 13 | 68.57 |
| 14 | 52.57 |
| 17 | 58.57 |
| 22 | 55.57 |
| 23 | 76.29 |

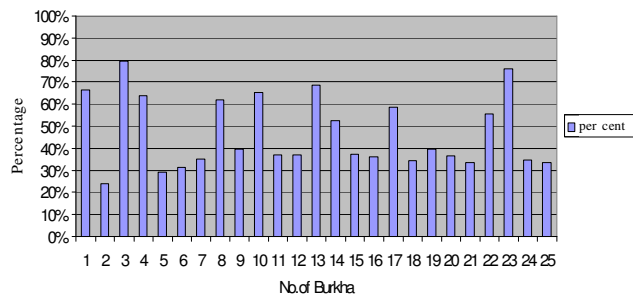


Fig. 1 : Rating of designed Burkha

The secondary survey was conducted with 10 miniature sample of Burkha. These miniature Burkhas were evaluated on the basis of colour combination, silhouette, details (in collar, neckline, sleeve, silhouette, colour and print) and any other which might be required. Finally, four best Burkhas design *i.e.* 3, 8, 13 and 23 were selected for the final construction. The results obtained are presented as:

Fig. 2 shows that in design No. 3, 13 and 8 No. change was required in the neckline but in design No. 23 slight change in the depth of neckline was suggested.

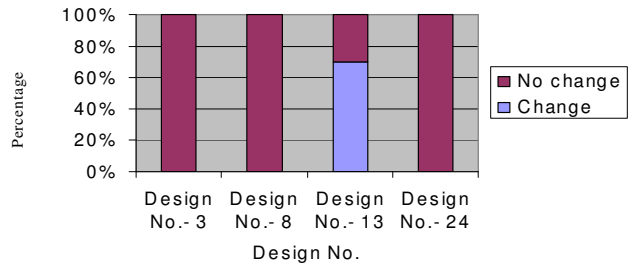


Fig. 2 : Neckline

Fig. 3 illustrates that all respondents liked the designed collars.

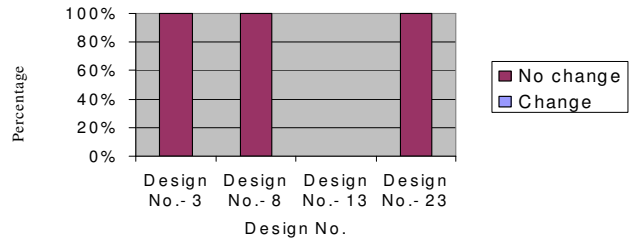


Fig. 3 : Collar

This Fig. 4 shows that all the respondents liked the silhouette of the prepared Burkhas.

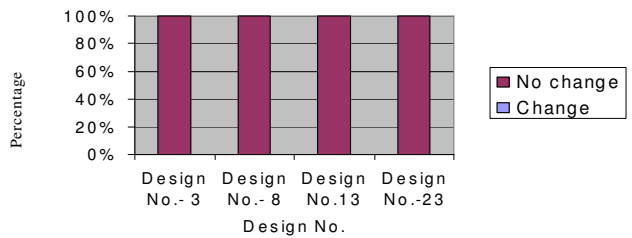


Fig. 4 : Silhouette

Fig. 5 exhibits that in design No. 3 and 8 No. change was required but in design No. 13 and 23, colours can be changed to earthy tones.

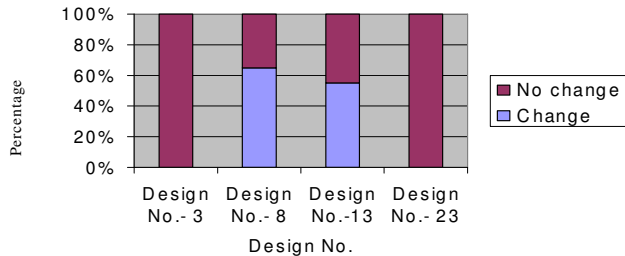


Fig. 5 : Colour- combination

Fig. 6 shows that, the prints of the Burkha No. 3, 8 and 13 were found appropriate by the respondents where as in Burkha No. 23, the prints can be altered to tiger prints to add appeal to it.

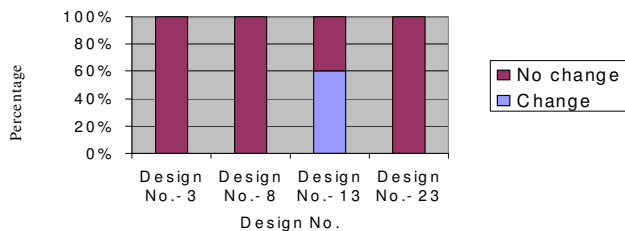


Fig. 6 : Print

Fig. 7 shows that when asked about any other changes or recommendations, in design No. 23 as it was but there was a suggestion for inclusion of piping at princess line as also in design.

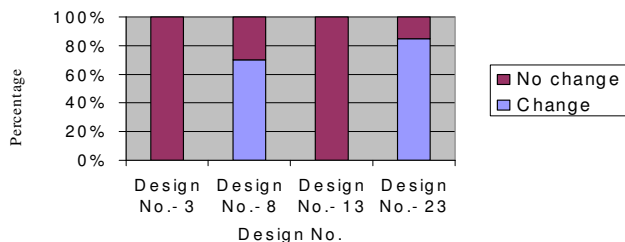


Fig. 7 : Other recommendation

Final Burkhas were assessed on the basis of colour-combination, cost and aesthetic appeal and Burkha No. 23 was most appreciated by wearer.

The study can be conducted to design Burkhas with those features that have not been incorporated even by designer interventions. Some salient findings of the study are that

- The data was analyzed and 25 designs were proposed by the researchers out of which top 10 preferred designs were developed into miniature samples.
- The prepared miniature samples with the help of 1/4 scales were evaluated and four of them were developed into final Burkhas. The analysis was based on:
 - Colour-combination,
 - Aesthetic appeal and
 - Cost

Design No. 3 received 84.8 per cent acceptability for colour-combination and 82.4 per cent acceptability in aesthetic appeal. This Burkha print was inspired from Zebra skin with tailored collar, wrap cuff, plain sleeve and over coat.

Design No. 8 received 92.8 per cent acceptability for colour-combination and 81.6 per cent acceptability in aesthetic appeal. This Burkha print was inspired from cat skin with tailored collar, plain sleeve and two pieces of front portion.

Design No. 13 received 94.4 per cent acceptability for colour-combination and 92 per cent acceptability in aesthetic appeal. This Burkha print was inspired from beehive with tailored collar, plain sleeve, fold up collar, coat like Burkha, princess line present in front.

Design No. 23 received 95.3 per cent acceptability for colour-combination and 93.6 per cent acceptability in aesthetic appeal. This Burkha print was inspired from giraffe skin with round neckline, plain sleeve, yoked bodice, box pleat in centre front. It was most appreciated by wearer.

Pricing of the prototype/ Burkha was done on the cumulation of the cost of the raw materials, marginal profit and labor cost. Considering the quote cost of the prototype, most of the respondents agree to pay the same but some found the cost of the prototype a little above affordability preference percentages from survey.

All the developed designs were acceptable and had a ready potent market if mass production will be done. These prototypes were really trendy and attractive.

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