



Full Length Review Article

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING CLOTHING PATTERN AND SATISFACTION LEVEL OF ELDERLY WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

The present investigation was undertaken to assess existing clothing pattern and satisfaction level of elderly women residing in Udaipur city by using survey method. Random selection of 40 elderly women in the age range of 65 to 70 years from *Mathushree mahila* club and *Varishth Mahila Prakoshth* of Vigyan samiti, Udaipur formed the sample. The data was personally collected by the researcher through developed structured interview schedule. Findings revealed that majority of the respondents (65%) purchased their clothing from local market in dark colour (47.5%) and medium weight fabric (42.5%), *tailor stitched* and majority of the respondents (70%) were feeling comfortable and protected in their present clothing. It was observed that 25 to 45 per cent of respondents were less satisfied with their existing clothing wardrobe.

INTRODUCTION

Ageing is a global unifying factor with reference to clothing needs and care. It is evident that old persons are more or less the same everywhere in the world because their health needs constitute the common denominator. The health issues that pertain to the elderly and therefore have implications for clothing and care. Across the globe, fashion in clothing for the elderly is not a discriminating factor. However, health problems of the frail elderly and disabled old persons do require resort to adaptable clothing which in effect is in the best interest, comfort, and care of the elderly. The clothing need of the elderly women are very different from those people of other age groups due to occurrence of physiological and psychological changes. As people grow older, their body structure changes (eg. Thickened waist, enlarged hips, protruding abdomen and dropping bust line). Physiological condition deteriorates (eg. Greying or loosing hairs, wrinkling of skin, less effective metabolism and tendency towards hypothermia) and self-perception becomes generally negative. With growing age, it becomes more difficult to move, stretch, bend and twist, making the process of dressing a bit of a challenge at times. Clothing for seniors should look good; feel good, and most of all, to keep the wearer as independent as possible.

Loss of independence in the daily task of dressing can be very difficult for aging people. Clothing for the Elderly must be based upon the woman's abilities and limitations to dress with or without assistance. Sometimes adding adaptive features in elderly clothing helps them a lot in Self-dressing. Selection of elderly clothing be based on the person's need for clothing that he or she enjoys. Clothing that enhances appearance, increases independence, allow for functionality and provide comfort. There is no standard size system in existing ready-to-wear clothing industry and changes in body shapes during aging process are not taken into consideration by the businesses. Uncomfortable clothes can take away the joy of living. Present paper is part of the study based on 'Assessment of existing clothing pattern and satisfaction level of elderly women'.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present exploratory study was based on assessment of clothing needs of elderly women. The study was conducted in Udaipur district of Rajasthan. Based on the objectives of the study, the survey method was used to gather desired information from the selected respondents.

Selection of Sample

A sample of 40 elderly women in the age range of 60 to 65 years was selected purposively from *Matushree Mahila Club*, and *Varishth Mahila Prakoshth* of Vigyan Samiti, Udaipur

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which were having more than 150 elderly women members. These clubs are actively engaged for the welfare of elderly women of the society in Udaipur.

Development of tool

A pre- structured interview schedule was formulated in order to explore information about clothing needs of elderly women and problems faced by them during dressing and undressing by the researcher. The tool was comprised of the close ended questions based on the sample group.

Data collection

Based on the objectives of the study, the researcher has formulated the conceptual frame work of the research design. The data was collected using interview schedule through personal contact with the selected sample subjects to gather the required information.

Analysis of data

The collected data of survey was coded, tabulated and appropriate statistical measures were applied for its analysis. Frequency and percentage was used to analysis the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This part contains the outcomes of the analysis done on socio-personal profiles of the respondents. The socio-personal profile of the respondents included age, educational status, occupations of the respondents, type of the family and monthly income of the family.

The details of the information related to this have been furnished in table 1.

Table 1. Socio-personal traits of the respondents

n = 40		
Socio-personal traits	Number of respondents	Percentage
Age (in years)		
65-67 years	21	52.5
68-70 years	19	47.5
Education		
Middle level	3	7.5
High school	8	20
Graduate	10	25
Post graduate	12	30
Doctorate	7	17.5
Occupation		
Business	11	27.5
Service	29	72.5
Type of family		
Nuclear	14	35
Joint	26	65
Monthly family income (Rs.)		
10,000-50,000	25	62.5
50,001-90,000	15	37.5

Data given in the table indicates that the majority of the respondents (52.5%) belongs to the age group of 65-67 years, followed by the age groups 68-70 years (47.5%). The educational status of the respondents was categorized into secondary, Senior secondary, graduation, Post-Graduate and Doctorate. The data pertaining to education revealed that more than one fourth of the respondents (30%) were post graduate, exact one fourth 25 per cent respondents were graduate, 17.5

per cent respondents were educated up to doctorate, 20 per cent respondents were educated up to high school. It was observed that the 65 per cent respondents belonged to joint families. Regarding occupation, the data revealed that majority of the respondents (72.5%) belonged to service class and less than half of the respondents (27.5%) were engaged in family business. The monthly income of the respondents was categorized into two groups. The findings of the study revealed that family income of majority of respondents (62.5%) was found in the range of Rs. 10,000-50,000/- per month and remaining respondent's (37.5%) family income was in the range of Rs. 50,001-90,000/- month. It was interesting to note that cent percent respondents were associated locally with one or more than one club/society/organization. At this age juncture to keep themselves busy and remain social.

Existing clothing pattern of elderly women

The researcher explored the existing clothing pattern and practices of aged females such as type of clothing present in their wardrobe, preference in type of material, colour, texture, and satisfaction level with different aspects etc. The data gathered has been analyzed and presented below

Existing clothing pattern

The researcher tried to find out the existing clothing pattern of selected respondents

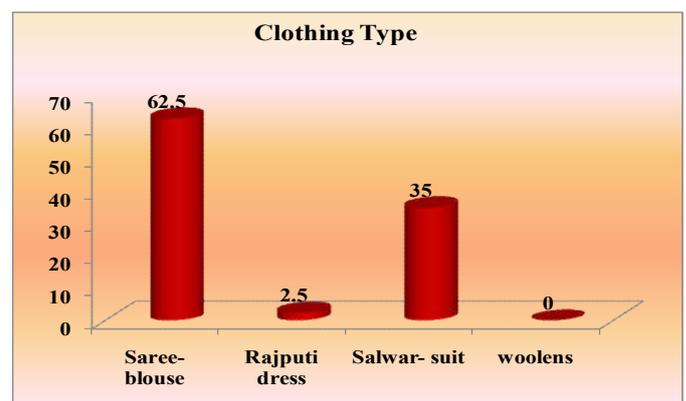


Fig. 1. Percentage distribution of respondents by existing clothing pattern

Data in fig.1 depicts that majority of respondent (62.5%) were used to wear saree-blouse, followed by 35 per cent of respondents who wore salwar-suit for casual wear, few respondents (2.5%) were used to wear rajputi-poshak, one fourth of the respondents (25%) gave multiple responses as they used to wear sari-blouse and salwar-suit both. The reason for wearing different dresses may be that the sample subjects selected for the present investigation comprised of mixed group of elderly women from different castes like Punjabi, Rajputi and Hindu and clothing pattern of each of these women group varies from sarees to salwar- suits.

Number of clothing in their wardrobe

The data pertaining to number of clothing in the wardrobe of respondents have been presented in Table-2.

Table 2. Percentage distribution of respondents by number of clothing in their wardrobe

Items		Number of dresses	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
SAREE		1-10	10	25
		11-20	15	37.5
		21-30	15	37.5
BLOUSES/KURTIS (by type of opening)	Front opening	1-10	5	12.5
		11-20	25	62.5
		21-30	10	25
	Back opening	1-10	2	5
		11-20	-	-
		21-30	-	-
BLOUSES/KURTIS (by sleeve length)	Half sleeve	1-10	7	17.5
		11-20	23	57.5
		21-30	10	25
	3/4 th sleeve	1-10	8	20
		11-20	-	-
		21-30	-	-
	Full sleeve	1-10	5	12.5
		11-20	-	-
		21-30	-	-
RAJPUTI -POSHAK		1-10	-	-
		11-20	1	2.5
		21-30	-	-

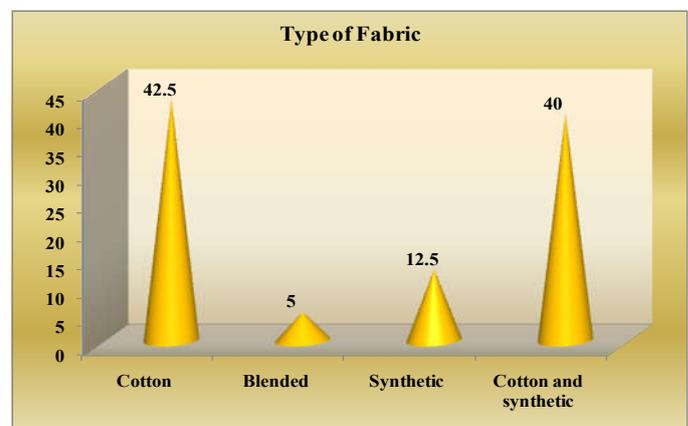
Table-2 shows that 25 per cent of respondents were having 1-10 number of sarees in their wardrobe while an equal number of respondents (37.5%) were having 11-20 and 21-30 number of sarees each in their wardrobe respectively. Majority of the respondents preferred front opening blouses/kurti. Majority of the respondents (62.5%) were having 11-20 number of front opening blouse/kurti, while few respondents (12.5%) were having 1-10 number of blouses in their wardrobe and 25 per cent respondents were having 21-30 number of front opening blouses/kurti in their wardrobe. Reason of using front opening blouses/kurti was linked with ease in finger movements in operating fasteners while dressing and undressing. Only 5 per cent of the respondents were having back opening blouse/kurti in the range of 1-10 numbers. With regards to sleeve length, majority of the respondents (57.5%) possessed 11-20 number of half sleeve blouse/kurti, followed by 21-30 number by 25 per cent respondents and remaining 17.5 per cent respondents were having 1-10 number of half sleeve blouse/kurti. Only 20 per cent respondents were having 1-10 number of 3/4th sleeve blouse/kurti and few of the respondents (12.5%) were having 1-10 number of full sleeve blouse/kurti in their wardrobe.

Type of Fabric in existing clothing

The researcher made an attempt to get the view of the respondents regarding their choice in selecting fabric of their garment. In response to this, 42.5 per cent respondents showed their preference towards cotton fabric, 5 per cent respondents preferred blended fabric, 12.5 per cent respondents gave preference to synthetic fabric. Rest of the respondents (40%) preferred both cotton and synthetic fabric in their clothing (Fig.2).

Color in existing clothing

In response to the query about choice of colors in existing garments, it was found that majority of the respondents (47.5%) preferred dark colors, while 22.5 per cent respondents liked all types of color in their garments.

**Figure 2. Percentage distribution of respondents by Fabric in existing clothing****Table 3. Percentage distribution of respondents by colour in existing clothing**

n=40		
Color preference	Frequency	Percentage
dark	19	47.5
Light	7	17.5
dull	5	12.5
All	9	22.5

Fabric weight

Data presented in table- 4 depicts that 42.5 per cent respondents liked medium weight fabric followed by 37.5 per cent respondents who preferred light weight fabric. Few respondents (20%) preferred heavy weight fabric.

Table 4. Percentage distribution of respondents by fabric weight

n=40		
Fabric weight	Frequency	Percentage
Light weight	15	37.5
Medium weight	17	42.5
Heavy weight	8	20

Mode of purchase

Table 5 shows that majority of the respondents (65%) purchased their clothing from local market, 22.5 per cent respondents purchased their clothing from other place like online.

Table 5. Percentage distribution of respondents by mode of purchase

n=40		
Mode of purchase	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Shopping malls	1	2.5
Designer shop	4	10
Local market	26	65
Any other place	9	22.5

Factors affecting clothing purchase decision

Data presented in Table 6 depicts that cent percent respondents gave prime importance to 'comfort' and 'appearance' of the clothing while making decision. More than 80 percent of the respondents consider budget, durability, fabric, color, texture and design while taking decision regarding clothing purchase. Fashion was given least importance by respondents (50%).

Table 6. Percentage distribution of respondents by factors affecting clothing purchase decision

n=40		
Factors affecting clothing purchase decision	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Budget	35	87.5
Comfort	40	100
Appearance	40	100
Constructional features	26	65
Functionality	24	60
Durability	36	90
Style	30	75
Color	37	92.5
Fabric	39	97.5
Texture	36	90
Design	32	80
Fashion	20	50

Table 9. Percentage distribution of respondents by satisfaction level with regard to material and construction

n=40						
Aspect	Satisfied (f)	%	Less satisfied(f)	%	Not satisfied (f)	%
Material of the garment	32	80	8	20	0	0
Constructional detail						
Direction of grain	27	67.5	13	32.5	0	0
Length of the garment	22	55	18	45	0	0
Garment fitting	22	55	18	45	0	0
Length of the sleeve	24	60	16	40	0	0
Fitting of sleeve	24	60	16	40	0	0
Neckline shape	30	75	10	25	0	0
Size of neck	29	72.5	11	27.5	0	0
Finishing of neckline	20	50	15	37.5	5	12.5

Form of clothing- The data regarding form in which clothing is purchased i.e. home -made, tailor- made or ready-made was also gathered from the respondents and has been presented in Table 7. It was found that clothing of majority respondents (82.5%) was *tailor stitched*, however, the material was purchased and given to tailor either in plain fabric form or semi stitched form. It was found that rest of the respondents (17.5%) purchased ready-made dresses. None of the

respondents had home- made clothing in their wardrobe, the reason for this may be lack of sewing skills or age related problem as observed during data collection by the researcher. Similar results were quoted by Hogge and Bear (1986) in their study on "Elderly women's clothing" that most women purchased ready to wear garments which sometimes required alteration.

Table 7. Percentage distributions of respondents by form of clothing

n=40		
Form of clothing	Frequency	Percentage
Tailor -made	33	82.5
Ready- made	7	17.5
Home -made	-	-

Comfort and protection in their existing wardrobe

The data pertaining to comfort and protection in their existing wardrobe by respondents have been presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Percentage distribution of respondents by comfort and protection in their existing wardrobe

n=40		
Feeling comfortable and protected	Frequency	Preference
Yes	28	70
No	12	30

Table 8 shows that majority of the respondents (70%) were feeling comfortable and protected in their present clothing and rest of the 30 per cent respondents were not feeling comfortable and protected in their present clothing.

Satisfaction level with regard to material and construction

Data in table-9 reveals that 80 per cent respondents were *satisfied* with the material of their garment, followed by 20 percent respondents who found *less satisfied*. None of the respondents were found *not satisfied* from material of the garment. Under the 2nd aspect i.e. constructional detail, in direction of grain, majority of the respondents (67.5%) were

found satisfied with the direction of grain while 32.5 per cent respondents were found less satisfied, the reason of their satisfaction as disclosed by them was that the garment constructed on bias grain was more comfortable and stretchable than those which were made on length wise grain. Regarding length of the garment, table further shows that 55 per cent respondents were *satisfied* with length and fitting of the garment and remaining 45 per cent respondents were *less satisfied*. None of the respondents was found in the category of

'not satisfied' in all aspects expect finishing of neckline of garment by few respondents (12.5%). The reason for this may be that elderly clothing is mostly tailor-made and ready-made, in which garment construction, material and finishing is given prime importance.

Conclusion

Findings revealed that majority of the respondents (65%) purchased their clothing from local market, dark coloured (47.5%) and medium weight (42.5%). Cent percent respondents gave prime importance to 'comfort' and 'appearance' of the clothing while making decision followed by budget, colour texture, etc. Clothing of majority of respondents (82.5%) was *tailor stitched* and majority of the respondents (70%) were feeling comfortable and protected in their present clothing. It was observed that 25 to 45 per cent of respondents were less satisfied with their existing clothing wardrobe. Hence, there is need to design adaptive clothing for elderly women, clothing that enhances their appearance, increases independence, allow for functionality and provide comfort. Lee (2012), also opined that *Ready-to-wear* clothing industry tends to design dresses for young consumers and it ignores consumers at 65 and plus.

Since elder population increases more than young population, there is need to consider preferences of elders in both marketing and people's problems.

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